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SCHOOL INFORMATION

1. MISSION STATEMENT

Link Community Charter School will provide an outstanding middle school education for learners of all academic abilities by developing the mind, body, and spirit through a strong curriculum, experiential learning, immersion in the arts, and an enduring commitment to Core Values; this will allow them to be successful in competitive high schools and become responsible and resourceful citizens who give back to others.

2. VISION STATEMENT

Link Community Charter School is a challenging and supportive environment that nurtures the whole child and engenders a love for learning. Students will demonstrate intellectual competence, social responsibility, and commitment to their community. Link Community Charter School graduates will matriculate to competitive high schools that best match their individual needs and goals. Implementation of the school's vision is achieved through the following key elements:

Outstanding Middle School Education: Adolescents of all academic abilities take a journey of discovery in a powerful learning community that enriches and develops each student's mind, body, and spirit. Students actively participate in the learning process and faculty utilize a progressive approach with a commitment to high expectations and a positive environment. The program includes a strong core curriculum, vibrant arts education, experiential learning, and opportunities that enhance and enrich students' lives.

Lifelong Values: The faculty and staff model and teach the Core Values of respect, responsibility, caring, honesty, doing one's best, and following directions. Students develop a strong character and moral compass with which to make decisions that impact their lives and the lives of others and practice the Core Values.

High School Placement: Students possess a strong foundation of skills, knowledge, creativity, analytical thinking, problem-solving, and lifelong values. Students receive admission to competitive high schools, including independent day and boarding, magnet, and parochial/archdiocesan schools. Students are successful in high school, college, and beyond.

Social Justice: Students understand human rights for all people, as well as a commitment to caring for the Earth and toiling for peace. By sharing best practices and serving as a model school, Link Community Charter School works within the larger educational arena to support education reform and to improve access to high performing urban schools. The school teaches sustainable practices and respect for the Earth and develops peaceful attitudes and actions in all members of the school community.

3. PHILOSOPHY

Link Community Charter School's educational approach is student centered—informed by student needs and developed to support student growth with a deeply held belief that all children possess great talents and the capacity for strong performance and that it is the school's role to present the opportunity to learn and support the achievement of their full potential. Using a combination of traditional instruction and more progressive instructional approaches, Link creates an environment where students can grow and thrive and ultimately direct their own learning. Traditional instruction is seen in the classroom-based, teacher-driven activities that include lecture, question and answer, drills and practice, and explicit teaching of skills. This direct instruction slowly gives way to more independent study, problem solving, and small group activities. Ultimately, students develop knowledge and skills through experience and reflection with an emphasis on field learning in the outdoors, in a garden, or in a lab. Overall the aim of instruction is to arm students with the knowledge and skills to encounter new, diverse experiences and be equipped to apply what they know to what they have never seen before.

4. SCHOOL CULTURE

Link Community Charter School's positive school ethos delivers to all stakeholders a community grounded in its Core Values of caring, respect, honesty, responsibility, following directions, and doing one's best. By valuing the community and the individual and developing a physically and emotionally safe place, all members are nurtured and held accountable for the expectations of the school. Instruction is delivered with positive engagement so as to invite every student on a journey of discovery. Discipline is delivered in a respectful way to engender self-reflection and growth. Positive motivation and affirmative attitudes are emphasized to develop an awareness of greatness and potential in each and every student, as they set goals and ultimately demonstrate achievement. Gratitude and openness to individual gifts and contributions engender cooperation and acceptance. Appreciation of culture and the arts provide opportunities for creative expression and problem

solving. An awareness of the limitless possibilities supports risk-taking and growth for every student. The ethos embraces every child, no matter their learning style or level of academic achievement. These basic tenets underlie every aspect of Link Community Charter School. They promote academic achievement and personal growth. We believe our students will succeed, and we accept the responsibility to create the right environment to support that success.

5. CORE VALUES

Link Community Charter School's Core Values are:

RESPECT

RESPONSIBILITY

CARING

HONESTY

FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS

DOING ONE'S BEST

We believe that our school community is most successful when these Core Values are practiced. They should permeate all that we do. Link's administration, faculty, and staff are committed to living and teaching these values. The school is not infallible; staff will make mistakes. It is how we approach the process of reflection and accountability that will support our positive school culture.

It is our expectation that Link students will incorporate and practice these values in their everyday lives through their work as students and through their relationships at school and home. We hope that Link students carry them into their next level of education and their future lives.

It is also our expectation that Link parents and guardians will practice our Core Values in interactions and communications with one another, staff, and students.

6. BRIEF HISTORY OF LINK

In 1969, Project Link Educational Center began in an old three-story frame house with 50 seventh grade students. It was founded by Sister Vivien Jennings, O. P. and the Sisters of Saint Dominic of Caldwell, NJ, in response to the devastating riots that shook Newark in the late 1960's. Their hope was to provide a caring, private school environment to children of all religions, as well as a successful educational experience to students in those crucial years of early adolescence.

By 1971, Link had settled into the former parish school of St. Stanislaus Church on Irvine Turner Boulevard. It had grown to over one hundred students and began its long history of providing a successful educational experience to Newark's children. Its design and structure provided for small classes where students could get individual attention from caring and dedicated faculty. It became a safe and peaceful place where students could obtain a quality education.

In 1991, Project Link became Link Community School. The new name let the broader community know that Link was a school designed to serve the needs of the community as well as to stress its mission to build a sense of community among its students and their families.

In 2012, Link Community School relocated to its present building at 23 Pennsylvania Avenue, the former parish school of St. Columba Church. Armed with a 43-year legacy of success and a building that allows for growth, Link looked to future possibilities for enhancing its program and serving more students.

Then in February 2013, the Link Board of Trustees made several important decisions regarding the school:

- To eliminate tuition as a barrier to a quality education;
- To apply to the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) to convert to a charter school, to provide additional resources to educate students; and
- To expand to include grades 5 and 6, along with the original grades 7 and 8, to deepen the school's program.

In July 2014, the NJ DOE granted approval for Link to convert to a charter school to serve middle school students from Newark, Irvington, East Orange, and Orange. The charter included the school's expansion plan, to add grade 5 in the fall 2014 and grade 6 in the fall of 2015. Phasing in the grades was considered important - to give the school adequate time to prepare curriculum as well as to plan to physically accommodate two new grade levels. In the spring of 2015, Link Education Partners (LEP), a non-profit organization which supports the mission of Link Community Charter School, purchased the facility the school was renting at 23 Pennsylvania Avenue in Newark to provide the school with a permanent home. LEP has

made improvements in the building and plans to make even more enhancements to the space to support the rich, comprehensive curriculum at Link. Link welcomed four full grades – 5 through 8, with a total of 288 students in September 2015. Given the increased enrollment spanning four grades, the school divided into an Upper House (grades 7 & 8) and a Lower House (grades 5 & 6). In February 2018, the NJDOE approved Link’s charter for renewal for the next five years and for expansion by 8 seats per grade to occur over a four-year period (one grade each year).

7. GOALS FOR LINK COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL

- a. To provide students with the competencies needed to achieve personal fulfillment and global stewardship by:
 - designing and implementing learning programs that strengthen students' academic abilities by teaching them to use their minds well;
 - assessing each student's individual learning style and academic strengths and weaknesses;
 - fostering a positive self-image and self-confidence among students and faculty;
 - fostering independence leading to the recognition that the locus of control lies in the individual;
 - using good communication skills throughout the school;
 - infusing the curriculum with a global perspective;
 - providing experiences incorporating nature and the arts; and
 - providing the students with competencies using technology.
- b. To lead students to realize that respectful attitudes flow from knowledge by:
 - teaching the principles of interdependence, cooperation and difference among all things;
 - providing experiences of life and lifestyle differences;
 - providing opportunities to experience different cultures and the beliefs and values that flow from them; and
 - providing experiences for genuine service to others.
- c. To increase family and community involvement with students and the school by:
 - involving parents meaningfully in the activities of the school and in implementing and planning its goals and mission;
 - keeping families, businesses, and professional groups informed about the school; and
 - building partnerships that enrich students' lives and broaden their horizons.
- d. To provide a nurturing, supportive, peaceful atmosphere in the school by:
 - living the Core Values;
 - modeling caring, community, warmth, support and peacemaking;
 - celebrating together as a faculty and Link community; and
 - presenting a discipline policy that reflects fairness, firmness, and forgiveness.

8. PROFILE OF A LINK GRADUATE

Link Community Charter School Graduates will be:

Intellectually Competent

- Read, write, listen, and speak with clarity and confidence for a variety of purposes and audiences.
- Think critically and creatively.

Socially Responsible

- Contribute to, and appropriately accept responsibility for self and the welfare of others in family, school and community.
- Respect and accept the unique contributions of each individual to society.
- Identify their gifts and talents and use them in positions of leadership and service

Community Oriented

- Learn the value of service to others.
- Be able to work as a part of a team striving towards a common goal.
- Show appreciation for their experience of being students of Link Community Charter School by continuing to demonstrate support and school spirit through participation in the life of the school as alumni.

9. ACCREDITATION AND MEMBERSHIPS

Link Community Charter School is a member of Schools That Can, the Newark Charter School Fund, and the New Jersey Charter School Association. Link Community Charter School upholds the highest principles of transparency and public accountability, serving an unmet need in Newark, striving for educational excellence, and fulfilling its mission to educate all students in the most equitable manner possible.

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. PURPOSE AND USE OF THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook exists to foster the efficient operation of Link Community Charter School, as well as to inform students and families as to the standard procedures and systems of our school. The handbook is based on the policies and regulations adopted by the Link Community Charter School Board of Trustees; it does not replace them. [The Link Community Charter School policy and regulations manual is available in the school's Main Office for public access.](#)

The school administration is given the flexibility to exercise discretion regarding the implementation of the guidelines that have been set. The Head of School has the right to take actions other than those specified in the handbook, but which are within New Jersey State Law. The handbook is subject to change at any time when determined to be necessary by the Link Community Charter School Board of Trustees or the school administration. If changes are made to the handbook, parents/guardians will be notified promptly via the weekly parent newsletter and/or the school website (www.llinkschool.org).

2. NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY/NOTICE

Link Community Charter School values and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, affectional or sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, age, social or economic status, or disability in admission or access to its programs and activities. Link does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs or activities. Sexual harassment is expressly prohibited. Link will not tolerate sexual harassment in any form. Title VI, 42 U.S.C. §2000d requires that all vocational opportunities will be offered without regard to race, color, national origin, sex or disability. Any person having inquiries concerning Link's compliance with Title VI, Title IX, ADA, the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination, (NJ LAD) or Section 504, is directed to contact the Principal. Link has a grievance procedure for discrimination complaints. Please speak with the Principal for a description of this procedure, who will also supply information as to the existence and location of services, activities, and facilities that are accessible to and usable by disabled person.

3. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Parent involvement in a child's education is of vital importance to his/her success. The best way a parent can support his/her child at Link is to meet the following expectations:

- To support the philosophy and mission of the school;
- To cooperate with all of the procedures and regulations of the school;
- To share your child's capabilities and learning style so staff can address any needs and make plans for how best to support him/her;
- To support your child's development and engage in conversation;
- To attend conferences, report card nights, and other school activities and events;
- To supervise written and study assignments at home, providing a quiet place and time for work;
- To send your child to school on time, well rested and fed;
- To send your child to school dressed and groomed in compliance with the uniform dress code;
- To provide the school office with current home, work, cell and emergency telephone numbers, as well as current mailing and e-mail addresses; and
- To participate in the life of the school.

Parents are always welcome at Link and are requested to check in at the Main Office when entering the building. If you would like to speak with a teacher, advisor, Dean, Principal, or Head of School, please make an appointment so that sufficient time is set aside for your concerns. Please note that parents may not meet with a teacher while he or she is teaching or in the halls before, during, or after school as he/she may have responsibilities at those times.

Parents are asked to be supportive. School administration, staff, and teachers will provide opportunities for parents to share concerns and feedback and listen to such, but when the school's decisions differ from the parents' preferences or opinions, it is important that the school and home work together with mutual respect, acting in the best interest of the students. Support from the parents is vitally important to the building of trust and respect among students and staff.

4. FUNDRAISING/VOLUNTEERING

From time to time, the school may hold fundraising programs and events to supplement the school's operating budget. Families are asked to support these endeavors as efforts that directly support student and family programming. Additionally, families are encouraged to support the Link Parent Association's fundraising efforts, the proceeds of which also benefit the students and the school.

Parents/guardians are also encouraged to volunteer at the school. Some possible tasks are chaperoning a dance, serving food at Link family events, assisting in the Main Office with mailings or other clerical work, speaking with prospective parents at Open House, selling refreshments at school events, etc.

5. LINK PARENT ASSOCIATION

Link encourages all parents to join the Link Parent Association (LPA) and to attend the monthly LPA meetings. The LPA, a parent-run organization that is separately incorporated from the school, supports the education of children at Link Community Charter School and fosters a close relationship between all stakeholders - administration, teachers, parents, and students. It provides programming as well as volunteer and financial support for student and family activities and events, and a platform for open discussion and communications with the school administration. The LPA meets at the school monthly, and all parents are invited to attend and participate. Meeting dates are posted on the school's website calendar and are listed in the weekly parent newsletter, *Link to Home*.

6. PARENT /STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

To ensure a successful experience for children at Link, it is important that the lines of communication between school and home are open at all times and that communications are handled in a prompt and cooperative manner. Just as students are expected to use the Core Values to guide their actions, so are teachers, staff, and parents expected to use them. All communications are expected to be honest, caring, and respectful.

To ensure effective communications, the school will:

- Contact parents if there is a serious academic or behavioral concern with their children;
- Schedule opportunities for parents to meet with teachers and administrative personnel;
- Ensure that parent phones calls and emails are handled promptly; and
- Communicate information about the school on a regular basis via publications in the Parent Communications Envelope ("purple envelope") sent home each Friday, website, phone and/or email.

Similarly, parents are expected to:

- Read the Parent-Student Handbook and discuss it with their child;
- Take advantage of scheduled opportunities to speak with teachers and administrative staff, and attend all three Report Card Nights;
- Attend programs and events at the school;
- Review their child's grade books on PowerSchool on a regular basis and read through all reports coming home, such as the *DeansList* behavior report, progress reports, report cards, etc.;
- Read all publications coming from the school and respond accordingly (complete permission slips, sign forms, etc.);
- Sign their child's homework (all grades) and daily reading log (Lower House);
- Read through all documents in the Parent Communications Envelope each week and ensure that their child return it each Monday morning with the parent signature card signed; and
- Respond to teacher or staff communications in a timely manner.

Link aims to create a successful partnership to resolve concerns among the parent-teacher-students of the school community promptly and thoroughly. If a parent has a concern about his/her child's academics or behavior, the parent should contact the child's advisor or teacher via phone or email to discuss the issue or arrange for a conference to discuss the issue. If the issue is not resolved, the parent may contact the Principal to arrange a conference.

If a parent believes that his/her child's academic or personal development needs are not being met, the parent should contact the Principal.

If a parent has a disagreement or misunderstanding with a teacher, the parent should call and arrange a conference with the teacher. All parties involved should come to the conference prepared to find an amicable solution to the situation. After the conference if a parent wishes to speak to the Principal, he/she may make arrangements via phone or email to do so. A teacher or staff member who is the object of the concern will be informed promptly and afforded the opportunity to provide his/her insight. If the issue remains unresolved, the parent may contact the Head of School, and ultimately the Link Community Charter School Board of Trustees, according to school policy. The Board; however, does not engage in the day-to-day operations or management of the school or with student issues. The Board does ensure that the school's policies and procedures are adhered to and that the mission is fully implemented.

7. VISITING THE BUILDING

Link Community Charter School is an open and welcoming community, but in order to ensure the safety and security of the students and staff, as well as the smooth and effective operation of the school, procedures are in place for anyone visiting the school.

All parents/guardians must sign in at the Main Office immediately upon entering the building and may not leave the Main Office for another area of the building without permission from the office staff.

Visitors, including parents, are required to sign in at the Main Office and wear a visitor's pass immediately upon entering the building and must be escorted by staff when in the school.

Anyone visiting the school, including parents, must obtain and wear a visitor's pass, unless attending a large-scale program or event.

8. DROP OFF AND PICK UP

The safety of our students is our primary concern, and parents are asked to help with the smooth arrival and departure of students each day.

Morning drop off:

- **School begins at 7:45 am for all students.**
- **No child should arrive to school BEFORE 7:15 am** as there is no supervision available. Students dropped off prior to 7:15 am will remain unsupervised, outside the school building.
- The school uses a "Stop, Drop and Go" procedure for student drop off in the morning. Please pull up to the front of the school at the main doors in the sectioned off line of traffic. Stop the car at the front door, drop off your child, and quickly go, so as not to tie up traffic. Students should be sitting closest to the passenger side, so they exit the vehicle on the side of the sidewalk. They should also be ready to exit quickly. They should not be lingering to gather their belongings, have documents signed, or have a conversation with a parent. By moving along quickly we ensure every parent can effectively "stop, drop, and go".
- Upper House (7th and 8th grades) will enter the building through the lower level door closest to Thomas Street/the park) and Lower House (5th and 6th grades) through the building's main doors.
- Once in the building, students will proceed directly to their assigned morning location, or if late, to the Main Office to sign in. Upper House students will be greeted at the lower level door and proceed to the checkpoint for uniforms, cell phone, and homework. Then they will enter the cafeteria for breakfast. At 8 am, advisors will line the students up. Lower House students will be greeted at the main doors and proceed to the checkpoint for uniforms, cell phone, and homework. They will then enter the gym to await lining up with their community advisors at 7:45 am.
- Students should arrive to school 15 minutes before the school start time so they can settle in nicely before the day begins. Parents should plan with their child to ensure timely arrival to school; this will build essential habits and skills.
- If crossing a street, students and their parents must use the crosswalks for safety reasons.

Afternoon pick up:

- **All students are dismissed at 4:10 pm.** (On Early Dismissal Days, all students are dismissed at 12:45 pm.)
- It is important that students who are not engaged in a school activity (athletic practice, game, tutoring, organized trip, etc.) leave the school immediately upon dismissal.
- All students will be escorted out the door by teachers, with 5th/6TH graders going toward Thomas Street and 7th/8th graders going towards South Street.
- Teachers will remain with students outside as parents arrive until 4:20, at which time the staff will go back inside the school building. It is imperative that parents be at school by 4:20 pm.
- If a parent runs late for pick up, the parent is asked to call the school with an estimate of the time of arrival, so staff can explain to your child and hold him/her until the parent's arrive. Parents will have to enter the school and sign their child out.
- It is important that parents be prompt for pick up, as it is only fair that teachers and staff be able to go home to their families too. If a child is not picked up by 6 pm, the parent will be called and told from which police precinct to pick up his/her child.
- If crossing a street, students and their parents must use the crosswalks for safety reason.
- Parents of students in grade 5 will complete a form designating dismissal instructions for their child. See Addendum B School Policy 8601.

9. SCHOOL CLOSING, DELAYED OPENING AND EARLY DISMISSAL FOR WEATHER OR OTHER EMERGENCY

Link Community Charter School makes independent decisions on school closures or changes to its daily schedule. Please note that Link does not follow the traditional public school schedule and will not necessarily be closed on the same non-weather-related closing days, holidays that the public schools are closed on, or local district professional days, etc. Please refer to the calendar on the school website and check postings for weather concerns.

If there is a change in weather condition during a school day and school will have to be cancelled, parents will be called so that preparations can be made to get their children home. Link uses an automated parent notification system which will alert parents via phone, text, or email of school closings and delayed openings. It is therefore important for parents to keep their contact information current for this system to work properly. In addition to the automated phone call, Link will post school closing and delayed opening information on its website, www.linkschool.org and its Facebook page as well as on ABC Channel 7 and NJNews 12 (TV and websites). We will also post a message on the school's main phone line, 973-642-0529.

10. STUDENT RECORDS

You are entitled to review your child's student records and to challenge its contents. Student records include information related to an individual student gathered within or outside of the School and maintained within the school system, regardless of the physical form in which it is maintained. Link may deny access to parents/legal guardians/adult students only upon court order. The parent/legal guardian/adult student may appeal such a denial.

"Student directory information" can be released to the public without consent. This information includes a student's name, grade level, date and place of birth, dates of school attendance, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities, weight and height relating to athletic team membership, degrees, awards, most recent school attended, and other similar information. The parent/guardian/adult student can submit a written statement to the Head of School to prohibit the disclosure of such information. Under No Child Left Behind, the school is required to provide students' general directory information to military recruiters, when requested. Parents/guardians may request that their child's information not be released without prior written parental consent. Link also compiles a school contact directory for official use. This directory contains a student's name, address, telephone number, date of birth, and school of enrollment. It is provided only to judicial and law enforcement personnel for official use, and to medical personnel who are currently providing services to the student. If the parent/guardian/adult student wants to exclude such information from this directory, the parent/guardian/adult student must notify Link in writing.

Students involved in school-based substance abuse programs are entitled to confidentiality. If staff learns of illegal activity from a source different from the student's substance abuse program, staff must report such information to law enforcement. Upon graduation or permanent departure of a student from the school, the parent/guardian/adult student may request a copy of the entire student record. Collection, maintenance and access to student records shall be conducted in accordance with the laws and School Policy 8330.

11. SURVEYING STUDENTS

Throughout the year, Link will administer surveys to students to gauge interest in programs and capture feedback on topics such as school safety and culture, academic rigor and high school preparation, and exposure to the arts. The results are then shared in the aggregate with stakeholders, including the NJ Department of Education. Should Link administer any survey that requests protected personal information, it will seek parental/guardian consent under the federal Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) and NJSA 18A:36-34.

12. ELIGIBILITY FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION AND RELATED SERVICES

A student shall be determined eligible and classified eligible for special education and related services when it is determined that a student has one or more of the disabilities defined below and that the disability adversely affects the student's educational performance and the student is in need of special education and related services. For more information please see School Policy 2460.

13. SECTION 504 SERVICES AND PROTECTIONS UNDER THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT ("ADA")

Section 504 is a federal law prohibiting discrimination in and by educational institutions (receiving federal funds) based upon disability. The ADA is a federal law providing similar protections, but this law is not limited to educational institutions. The laws are substantially similar. These laws apply to students, staff, and the general community. In order to be eligible for protection or services, an individual must have a defined physical or mental impairment which substantially impairs a "major life activity." Documentation must be provided for your child to receive 504 accommodations. For more information please see School Policy 2418. Any parent/guardian who believes that a student may be eligible for services under Section 504 should seek assistance from the Principal.

14. TRANSGENDER STUDENTS

Link is committed to providing a safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environment for all students. Link shall ensure that all students, including transgender students, have equal educational opportunities and equal access to Link's educational programs and activities. Link will comply with Federal and State laws and regulations regarding transgender students and no student shall be subjected to discrimination on the basis of gender identity or expression. Link will ensure the privacy of transgender students to the extent permitted by law. Link will not question or disregard the assertion of a student's gender identity. However, the Head of School or designee may question a student's asserted gender identity when there is credible basis for believing the student's gender identity is being asserted for some improper purpose. Link recognizes school-related issues regarding transgender students will vary on a case-by-case basis. Therefore, the Head of School or designee will meet with the parent and the student to discuss school-related issues, including but not limited to, names/pronouns, student records, restrooms, locker rooms, physical education classes, intramurals programs, interscholastic athletics, and dress codes.

15. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

The Board believes that students are citizens who possess the right to request redress of grievances and that students should be encouraged to respect lawful procedures for the resolution of disputes.

A student grievance means any complaint that arises out of the acts or policies of this Board or the acts of its employees. A student grievance will be heard in the following manner:

1. A student should first make the grievance known to the staff member most closely involved or with a guidance counselor and both shall attempt to resolve the matter informally and directly.
2. A grievance not resolved at the first step must be reduced to a written statement in which the student sets forth the specific nature of the grievance, the facts that gave rise to it, the relief sought, and the reasons why that relief is appropriate.
3. The written grievance may be submitted to the Principal, the Head of School, and the Board of Trustees, in that order and within a suitable period of time to be allowed at each level for the hearing of the grievance and the preparation of a response.
4. At each step beyond the first, the school authority hearing the grievance may summon the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of a grievant who is not an adult. The grievant may summon the assistance of his/her parent(s) or legal guardian(s) at any step;
5. A student grievance that proceeds to the Board will be determined promptly and the Board will issue a decision in no more than ten calendar days. The student will be informed of the right to appeal a decision of the Board to the Commissioner of Education.

The Head of School shall direct all staff members to respect the right of students to seek redress of grievances by lawful procedures without fear of reprisal.

16. BOARD POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

All Policies and Regulations of Link Community Charter School are available for review in the main office.

Students and parents are responsible for reviewing and understanding all relevant Board Policies and Regulations. Parents and students are specifically directed to the Policies and Regulations listed below:

- Policy 2361 Acceptable Use of Computer Networks/Computers and Resources
- Policy 3283 Electronic Communications Between Teaching Staff Members and Students and Policy 4283 Electronic Communications Between Support Staff Members and Students
- Policy 5200 Attendance
- Policy 5410, 5411, 5460 Promotion and Retention
- Policy 5500 Expectations for Student Conduct
- Policy 5511 Dress and Grooming
- Policy 5512 Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying
- Policy 5519 Dating Violence at School
- Policy 5330 Administering of Medications
- Policy 5516 Use of Electronic Communication and Recording Devices (ECRD)
- Policy 5530 Substance Abuse
- Policy 5600 Student Discipline/Code of Conduct
- Policy 5610 Suspension
- Policy 5701 Plagiarism
- Policy 5710 Student Grievance
- Policy 5750 Equal Educational Opportunity
- Policy 5755 Equity in Educational Programs and Services
- Policy 5770 Student Right of Privacy
- Policy 7441 Electronic Surveillance in The School Building and On School Grounds
- Policy 7523 School Provided Technology Devices to Students
- Policy 8330 Student Records
- Policy 8451 Control of Communicable Disease
- Policy 8601 Student Supervision After School Dismissal
- Policy 8690 Monitoring Devices on School Vehicle

17. 2019-2020 SCHOOL CALENDAR

These are the basic calendar dates for the year. If they change for any reason, parents will be notified via the parent newsletter, a flyer, a notice on the school website, and/or an automated phone call.

| | | |
|-----------|-------|--|
| September | 3 | School Opens for all grades, regular school hours |
| | 6 | Early Dismissal |
| | 20 | Early Dismissal |
| October | 11 | Early Dismissal |
| | 14 | No School: Columbus Day |
| | 25 | Early Dismissal |
| November | 7-8 | No School: Staff Professional Development Day on the 7th |
| | 15 | Early Dismissal |
| | 27 | Early Dismissal: Thanksgiving Break |
| | 28-29 | No School: Thanksgiving Break |
| December | 6 | Early Dismissal |
| | 20 | Early Dismissal |
| | 23 | No School: Winter Break Begins |

| | | |
|----------|-------|---|
| January | 2 | No School: Teacher Professional Development Day |
| | 3 | Students Return from Winter Break |
| | 10 | Early Dismissal |
| | 20 | No School: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day |
| | 24 | Early Dismissal |
| February | 7 | Early Dismissal |
| | 14 | No School: President's Day |
| | 17 | No School: President's Day |
| | 21 | Early Dismissal |
| March | 6 | Early Dismissal |
| | 20 | Early Dismissal |
| | 27 | No School: Staff Professional Development Day |
| April | 3 | Early Dismissal |
| | 10-17 | No School: Spring Break |
| | 24 | Early Dismissal |
| May | 8 | Early Dismissal |
| | 22 | Early Dismissal |
| | 25 | No School: Memorial Day |
| June | 5 | Early Dismissal |
| | 15-17 | Early Dismissal |
| | 18 | Last day of school and 8 TH Grade Graduation, Early Dismissal for grades 5,6 and 7 |

STUDENT LIFE: ACADEMICS

1. ACADEMIC HONOR CODE

It must be understood that all students who attend Link Community Charter School automatically pledge that all schoolwork - whether homework, reports, quizzes, tests, exams, etc., will be done only by the student to whom the work was given. Under no circumstances will a Link student copy, plagiarize, or do another student's work. Academic honesty is a Core Value at Link and must be followed at all times. Violations are handled pursuant to the discipline rubric.

2. DAILY SCHEDULE

School hours are 7:45 am to 4:10 pm except where noted on the school calendar. On select Fridays each month, students will be dismissed at 12:45 pm to allow for staff professional development and staff meetings. The dates and times will be noted on the school calendar included in this handbook (above), distributed at the start of the year, in the weekly parent newsletter (*Link to Home*), and on the school's website.

3. COURSE OF STUDIES

Link has developed a course of studies that meets all NJ state standards and the New Jersey Student Learning Standards and prepares students for competitive high schools.

Upper School (Grades 7 and 8)

English Language Arts (ELA)
 Social Studies
 Science
 Math
 Physical Education/Health
 World Languages
 High School Placement

Fine Arts
 Music
 Performing Arts
 Creative Writing
 Elective Period

Lower School (Grades 5 and 6)

Math
English Language Arts
Social Studies and World Cultures
Science
Physical Education/Health
World Languages (Grade 6)

Fine Arts
Music
Performing Arts
Life Skills
21st Century Research Skills (Grade 5)

4. EVALUATING STUDENT PROGRESS

Academic Grades

The academic year is divided into four quarters (marking periods). All students’ quarterly grades will be comprised of class work, homework, participation, quizzes, tests, labs, projects and other assignments as required by their teachers. The annual grade is the average of the four quarterly grades.

Academic Grading Scale

The scale below is used for all grades, for core and most co-curricular subjects:

A+ =97-100% A = 94-96% A- = 90-93%
B+ = 87-89% B = 84-86% B- = 80-83%
C+ = 79-77% C = 76-74% C- = 70-73%
F = 69% and below
I = Incomplete

Scale for High School Placement, Advisory, 21st Century Research Skills, World Languages, Health, and Life Skills

P = Has met all course requirements F = Has not met all course requirements

Personal Development Grades

Students are assessed quarterly on their growth beyond academics in the following areas:

| | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Completes homework | Cares for peers | Follows directions |
| Prepared for class | Does one’s best | Follows school rules |
| Accepts responsibility | Honest about actions | Respects adults |

Personal Development Grading Scale

The following grading scale is used for Personal Development grades:

1 = Excellent 2 = Good 3 = Needs Improvement 4 = Unsatisfactory

The annual Personal Development grade is the average of the grades earned in the four quarters.

5. MISSING ASSIGNMENT POLICY

Link Community Charter School supports the growth of student skills to help develop students into scholars. Working hard to complete assignments fully and on time is a quality of a student scholar. Link students therefore are expected to complete all of their assignments in good order (good quality, strong effort, and on time). Students have three days for every day absent due to illness to complete missing work before they receive a zero. Points are deducted for each day the homework is missing.

If a student has an absence of two days or more for serious illness or family emergency, the student and parent should coordinate a makeup schedule with the student’s teachers. If a parent knows a child will be out for two days or more, the parents may request the school to collect the student’s work for completion at home, if the child is able. Parents should email the teachers directly.

6. STANDARDIZED TESTING

Link Community Charter School will adhere to state guidelines regarding standardized testing. In addition, the school may administer additional tests and assessments during the year at well-spaced intervals during the year in order to assess skill levels and support students’ academic growth.

7. REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS

Advisors and teachers will communicate with parents/guardians throughout the year regarding student progress. Advisors call parents at least once each month to check in. While staff will initiate these contacts, it is the responsibility of parents to review assignments and assessments, and to communicate with teachers when they have concerns.

PowerSchool

Link Community Charter School has contracted with PowerSchool, to deliver a robust student information system. Parents will be given an ID, password and directions to log into PowerSchool to review their child's progress. For support, contact the school's Main Office.

Quarterly Progress Reports

Student progress will be assessed in the middle of each quarter, and a report, including teacher comments in each subject, will be sent home via the Parent Communications Envelope.

Report Cards

Report cards are distributed three times a year (first three quarters) on Report Card Night between 5:00 PM and 7:00 PM, when parents meet with their children's advisors and teachers to discuss progress. Fourth quarter report cards are mailed home by the end of June.

No students will be given a report card; parents/guardians must pick them up at Report Card night.

Report Card Night dates are posted on the school website calendar and on the calendar distributed to families at the start of the school year. .

8. ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

Teachers are often available before school, during lunch, or after school for additional support. If your child needs help in a subject, he/she should consult with the subject area teacher. Teachers may request that a student attend tutoring sessions.

9. RECOGNITION OF EXCELLENCE

Link celebrates academic and behavioral excellence throughout the year in the following ways:

Academic Effort Honors

Students with excellent academic performance may be awarded First and Second Honors at the end of each quarter. The criteria for awards are:

- First Honors: all "A's" in all core classes and all "P's" in co-curricular classes.
- Second Honors: all "A's" or "B's" in all core classes and all "P's" and "S's" in co-curricular classes

Core Value Honors

Students who live Link's Core Values in an outstanding way as measured by their personal development grades on the report card may be awarded First and Second Core Values Honors at the end of each quarter. The criteria for awards are:

- First Honors: all "1's" in the personal development section of their report card.
- Second Honors: all "1's" and "2's" in the personal development section of their report card.

Weekly Awards

Students may be selected by staff to receive awards at the end of the week.

Quarterly and Annual Awards

Students are recognized for academic effort and core value honors at the end of each quarter. At the end of the year, students may receive additional awards.

10. PROMOTION AND RETENTION

Academic Considerations

- A student who demonstrates proficiency at the end of the year in the core curricular subjects (English language

- arts, math, social studies, science, health, and physical education) may be promoted to the next grade level.
- A student who fails only one core curricular subject may be promoted to the next grade level if the student attends summer school in the subject failed and passes the class. If the student does not comply or successfully complete summer school, the student will be retained in the current grade.
- A student who fails two or more core curricular subjects may be retained in his/her current grade.
- Link Community Charter School will comply with the laws and regulations regarding 504 and special education populations in evaluation for promotion/retention as well as in classroom learning.
- It is within the purview of the head of school, in consultation with the teaching staff, to make an exception to promotion/retention on a case-by-case basis.

Attendance Considerations

- Link Community Charter School will schedule a minimum of 180 school days and expects that all students, barring extenuating circumstances, attend school at least 162 days in order to be promoted to the next grade.
- If a student is absent more than 18 days in a year, the student may be retained in his/her current grade.
- It is within the purview of the head of school, in consultation with the teaching staff, to make an exception to promotion/retention on a case-by-case basis.

Communication of Policies and Standards to Parents and Students

The promotion and retention policies and standards included in this Parent-Student Handbook can also be found in the Link Community Charter School Board of Trustees Policy and Regulations Manual located in the school's Main Office. Please see Link Community Charter School Board of Trustees Policy and Regulations 5410 regarding Promotion and Retention as well as Policy 5200 regarding Attendance for more information. This information will also be mentioned at parent orientation meetings and will be posted on the school's website.

Graduation Requirements

To be awarded a Link diploma, an 8th grade Link student must achieve cumulative (year-end) passing grades in the five (5) core subjects of English Language Arts, math, science, history, and health/physical education. Students who entered 5th grade at Link Community Charter School, must complete the following:

- 4 years of Math
- 4 years of English Language Arts
- 4 years of Science, including Earth, Sustainability, Life and Physical Science
- 4 years of Social Studies/World Cultures
- 4 years of Physical Education and Health
- 4 years of Art, Music and Performing Arts; 2 years of Creative Writing
- 4 years of Advisory
- 3 years of World Languages
- 2 years of High School Placement
- 1 year of 21 Century Research Skills

The requirements are adjusted for students entering Link after the 5th grade.

Students who have not passed their classes or have not successfully completed their Individualized Educational Plan, Individual Language Plan, or 504 Plan for their 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grade years combined will not receive a Link Community Charter School diploma and will not participate in the annual graduation activities (including the 8th grade class trip and 8th grade dance) or the graduation ceremonies (awards ceremony and commencement ceremony.)

Students who fail to meet the academic performance criteria in one core class noted above, but have successfully met the attendance criteria, will be promoted to the next grade only upon satisfactory completion of summer school. Appropriate summer school placement will be determined by the Principal.

11. PREPARATION/READINESS FOR CLASS

Link Community Charter School ensures that all students have the resources necessary to be successful in school each day by providing books, notebooks, assignment pads, pens, pencils, etc. to all students. Families are asked to bring school supplies at the beginning of the school year to be shared in the community. A list of supplies is distributed at the end of

each year and during the summer.

Textbooks and class sets of novels are the property of the school and must be covered and taken care of by students. Lost or damaged books must be replaced, and the cost of a new book will be assessed to the student to whom the book was assigned.

12. CHEATING/FORGERY/PLAGIARISM

Link Community Charter School expects that students complete all assigned work and assessments with academic integrity. Cheating, forgery, and plagiarism are strictly prohibited, and teachers will explain terms at the start of the school year. Honesty is a Core Value at Link, and cheating, forgery, and plagiarism are direct violations of that value. If a student is found in violation, there will be disciplinary consequences.

Cheating includes copying assignments or answers of any kind, giving assignments to others to copy, and allowing other students to copy during a quiz or test.

Forgery is signing someone else's name on a document.

Plagiarizing is simply presenting work as one's own, despite it being created by someone else without attributing the work to the actual creator. Plagiarizing includes copying word for word as well as restating original ideas without attributing the work to the creator. Failure to cite works found on the Internet or other sources is a form of cheating or stealing. This includes taking the writings or ideas of another and presenting them as if they were the student's own.

13. CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

Students are expected to maximize opportunities for growth and learning. To do so, they are expected to be actively engaged and to follow classroom regulations and expectations. These will be discussed with students in the first days of the school year and, when needed, throughout the school year. Essentially, students are required to come to class prepared, to participate fully, to be attentive and focused, to be respectful and to follow directions. It is imperative that students not only adhere to the Link Core Values, but also be held accountable for appropriate classroom behavior.

14. HOMEWORK

Teachers assign homework to reinforce and enhance classroom learning. They give an amount that is considered developmentally appropriate for each specific grade level.

It is expected that students complete the homework on the night it is assigned plus read a minimum of 30 minutes each day. Students have three days for each day absent due to illness to make up late work, but each day late will result in a reduction in grade. Students may not call home to have parents bring in homework they left at home.

Students use the yellow homework folder for all assignments and are expected to have assignments reviewed and signed by a parent.

Lower House students are to place their completed assignments in their yellow homework folder and hand in the folder as they enter the building in the morning. If a student is late, he/she will leave his/her homework in the Main Office where the teacher will pick it up later in the day. Assignments may not be handed in during class time. Upper House students will hand in their homework to each teacher as they enter the classroom.

Students are expected to thoroughly and thoughtfully complete all homework assignments on time. Students who fail to complete their homework and hand it in as required will be subject to disciplinary consequences.

STUDENT LIFE: REGULATIONS

1. ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance for each child is essential to his/her success in school and it is expected that students attend every day. A record of attendance is kept and will become part of the student's permanent record.

Attendance will appear on the student report card/transcript.

An accumulation of more than 18 unexcused absences in a school year may be cause for retention in the current grade.

As a student accumulates absences, Link Community Charter School will:

- send a letter home to parents/guardians when a student reaches 5 absences.
- call the parents/guardians when a student reaches 8 absences.
- require parents/guardians to attend a conference at the school when the student reaches 10 absences.

Attendance demonstrates strong commitment to one's studies. Families are expected to use the school's calendar when planning vacations, doctor's visits, and personal appointments so students do not miss any school. Students should not miss school for personal vacations, which could jeopardize a student's academic standing and, depending on the number of days absent, promotion to the next grade.

Link Community Charter School is required to take steps to respond to excessive absences, including but not limited to reporting to the NJ Division of Child Protection and Permanency (DCP&P) or filing with the courts.

If a child needs to leave school early, the parent must send in a note in the morning explaining the reason and the time the child will leave school.

Excused Absences

An excused absence is a student's absence from school for a full day or a portion of a day for the observance of a religious holiday pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:36-14 through 16 or any other day that the state may determine as an excused absence.

Unexcused Absences that Do Not Count Toward Truancy

An unexcused absence that does not count toward truancy is a student's absence from school for a full or portion of a day for the reasons listed below:

- The student's illness, supported by a written letter from the parent upon the student's return to school, along with a physician's note if the absence is three days or more.
- Where appropriate, when consistent with IEPs, Individuals with Disabilities Act, accommodation plans under 29 U.S.C. 794 and 705/20 and individualized health care plans.
- The student's suspension from school.
- Family illness or death supported by a written letter from the parents upon the student's return to school.
- A visit to a secondary educational institution, supported by a document indicating the student attended.
- Necessary and unavoidable medical or dental appointments that cannot be scheduled at a time other than a school day, supported by a physician's or dentist's note.
- An absence for a reason not listed above, but deemed unexcused, that does not count toward truancy by the Principal, upon a written request by the student's parent stating the reason for the absence and requesting permission for the absence to be an unexcused absence that does not count toward truancy.

Unexcused Absences That Count Toward Truancy

An unexcused absence that counts toward truancy is a student's absence from school for a full day or a portion of a day for any reason that is not excused as defined above.

Notifying the School of an Absence

A parent or guardian must call Link's Main Office by 8:15 AM to report and explain an absence. If the school does not hear from the parent of a student who does not show to school, the parent will be called.

If the absence is a planned one (e.g. unavoidable doctor appointment, funeral, etc.), the parent should notify the school in advance of the absence. If the absence is expected to be prolonged, the parent should notify the Main Office staff to arrange for make-up work.

Re-admission to School after an Absence

When returning to school after any absence, the student must bring in the Link Absence Form signed by a parent or guardian and turn it in to the Main Office staff.

When returning to school after an illness of three days or more, the student must bring a physician's note on the day of return to school. The note must include the diagnosis and length of time for recuperation, and any restrictions caused by the illness. This must be turned in to the Main Office staff immediately upon return.

When a student visits a high school, he/she needs to bring in a note from the school visited documenting his/her visit and turn it in to the Main Office Staff immediately.

Effect of Absence on After School Activities, Events, and Athletics

Students must be at school and arrive on time on days that there are school sponsored activities, events, and athletics scheduled after school or in the evening.

Making up Missed Work

Students must make up all work missed during an absence and are responsible for requesting missed assignments and assistance if required. The student has three days for each day of absence due to illness to make up the missed work. A student who misses an exam or test will be offered an opportunity to take the test or exam, or an appropriate alternate test /exam.

If a student has an absence of three days or more, the student and parent should coordinate a makeup schedule with the student's teachers. A parent may request and pick up work for the student to complete at home, if the child is able, by emailing their child's teachers.

If the student's absence is expected to be due to a chronic or temporary health condition, he/she may be eligible for home instruction in accordance with Policy 2412. The parent must request home instruction.

Consequences of Poor Attendance

Students with poor attendance may be denied participation in extracurricular activities, athletic competitions, and other school events if the Principal or designee deems a student's attendance does not meet the school's expectation. Any student with more than 18 absences in a school year, except for excused absences by state law, and absences due to suspension, may be retained at grade level.

Truancy

Truancy is ten or more cumulative unexcused absences that count toward truancy. The plan for truancy and the school's plan to help a student attend school on a regular basis can be found in the school's Regulation 5200. The regulation is posted on the school website.

2. LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS

If a student leaves the school grounds without the parent or guardian's knowledge and without permission from the school administration, the student will be suspended immediately.

If a student leaves the school at dismissal, he/she may not reenter the building, even if participating in after school activities unless given permission by the school administration. He/she may be subject to disciplinary action.

Students who are sent home for disciplinary reasons or for sickness may only leave school grounds with a parent/guardian or parent/guardian designate. Any student leaving the building during the school day for any reason must be signed out in the Main Office by a parent/guardian or parent/guardian designate.

3. LATENESS TO SCHOOL AND TO CLASS

Every student is expected to be on time for school each day so they do not miss out on instruction. The lateness of any member of our school community impacts our ability to be at our best. Any student who is not present at 7:45 am is considered late. There are not exceptions.

Students take responsibility for lateness by apologizing to the school community during Morning Circle if they are late to school.

Students arriving late to school must report to the Main Office immediately upon arrival, sign in (indicating the reason for the lateness), and get a late pass that is presented to the community or classroom teacher. The student must turn in his/her purple envelope and their homework at this time. The pass will indicate the time of arrival.

Students' lateness records are indicated on the weekly *Deanslist* report, report cards/transcripts. Chronic lateness may be subject to disciplinary action.

Students who are chronically late to school may be denied participation in extracurricular activities, athletic competitions, and other school events if the Principal or designee deems the tardiness does not meet with the school's expectations.

If a teacher keeps a student between classes, he/she will write a late pass for the student's next class. If a student is late for the next class without permission from a teacher, he or she will be considered late to class and subject to disciplinary action.

4. DRESS CODE

The regulation school uniform includes both an academic (regular) uniform and a physical education (gym) uniform. The academic uniform (worn to school three days per week and on other designated days) will be purchased from Flynn O'Hara Uniforms, 196-198 Ferry Street, Newark.

The physical education uniform, which is worn ONLY on days when a student has physical education class, will be purchased directly from Link and is stocked only at school.

Any student who is not dressed in the appropriate uniform will be sent to the Main Office to call home for (1) the parent/guardian to bring the correct clothing to school and (2) communicate the expectation to the parents/guardian. After repeated violations, the parent/guardian will be called to take the student home.

Taking a student home for lack of proper uniform is considered an unexcused absence. If a parent cannot be reached, the school may require the student to wear a "loaner" uniform, if available. If a parent has a compelling reason as to why the student will not be wearing a uniform on a given day, the parent can send in an Out-of-Uniform form to the Dean of Students. Students are allowed three excuse forms per marking period.

Regular Uniform

(To be worn on days when student does not have physical education class.)

- Gray and red striped skirt or solid gray slacks*
- Grey polo shirt with Link logo, short or long sleeved
- Plain black belt must be worn with slacks or shorts
- Solid black, burgundy or gray socks or tights with skirts
- Solid black socks with slacks
- Solid black shoes***; no boots or sandals
- Gray walking shorts
- Gray cardigan sweater with school logo
- Link crew neck sweatshirt*

Physical Education Uniform

(To be worn ONLY on days when students have physical education class.)

- Gray tee shirt with school logo
- Burgundy mesh shorts or sweatpants with Link logo
- Solid black socks
- Solid black sneakers with black laces***
- Optional: Link crew neck sweatshirt**

* Students must wear gray slacks, not gray denims, slim pants, or pull on pants. Slack must have belt loops for the required black belt.

** Students may not wear the hooded sweatshirt in the building unless approved with the Principal or her designee. Hoodies must be hung in cubbies or lockers at the start of the day. Nor may they wear any sweatshirt when the outdoor temperature is 80 degrees or higher.

***Solid black shoes and sneakers may not have ANY color or white on them. Laces on sneakers MUST BE black. The school shall accept a student's asserted gender identity.

Other Specific Dress Code Guidelines

All shirts and blouses must be tucked in at all times.

Students may not wear boots in the school building. Boots worn in inclement weather must be removed immediately upon entering the building and replaced with regulation school shoes.

Students may not wear cargo style pants or shorts, extremely oversized pants or shorts, or skinny/tight fitting pants or shorts. Pants and shorts must be worn at the hips – no sagging. No leggings allowed.

Students may not wear colored T-shirts or T-shirts with printing on them under their uniform clothing.

Students may not wear long sleeved garments under any short-sleeved shirt (dress, polo or tee shirt).

Students must wear sneakers on gym days. Sneakers must be a solid black - no color on them. Colored laces are not allowed.

Jewelry:

Students may wear plain stud earrings (ONLY one for each ear; no open or closed hoops), religious medals, and a plain watch. Students may NOT wear other jewelry including necklaces and bracelets.

Students may not wear Smartwatches or any wearable devices that connect to Smartphones and/or internet in the building.

Students wearing jewelry not allowed by the dress code will be asked to remove it and give it to a teacher or other staff member. Parents/guardians may pick up the jewelry at the end of the school day.

Students **may not wear nail polish, nail gel, or artificial nails**. Only clear nail polish on a natural nail is allowed. Students will be asked to remove the polish and artificial nails in the Main Office. If nail gel is not removeable with nail polish, students will be required to have it removed no later than the Monday after the violation.

Students **may not wear make-up** of any sort, including lipstick or lip gloss. (Clear, non-shiny lip balm is allowed. Students will be sent to the Main Office to remove makeup and may be subject to disciplinary action. Makeup in the student's possession will be confiscated and not returned.

Students **may not wear jackets, coats and non-Link sweaters or sweatshirts in school at any time**. Students should have a school sweater or sweatshirt with them during cold winter months every day as temperatures fluctuate in the school building.

No hats, hoods or head coverings are to be worn in the building at any time, unless required pursuant to religious practice. Students may wear simple SOLID colored headbands or scrunchies (to hold hair back) - black, burgundy, white, or gray ONLY. They may not wear headbands or other hair ornaments with flowers, bows, sequins, words, designs, brand symbols, or other adornments.

If a child wears a garment for religious reasons, parents need to advise the Dean of Students or Principal.

Students should arrive at and leave the school in their school uniform. Students participating in athletic activities after school may leave the building in the clothing they wear for that activity.

The school reserves the right to call a parent or guardian to pick up a child who is deemed to be dressed inappropriately at any time. Students not complying with the dress code will receive demerits. Additional consequences will be imposed for repeated violations.

Out of Uniform Days

On occasion students are invited to have out of uniform days (“Dress Down” or “Dress Up” days) but must be dressed neatly and in a manner that is appropriate for school. This may be a day to raise funds for a worthy cause or it may be a special occasion. The expectations are as follows:

- No torn or ripped jeans/pants/shorts of any kind; no leggings
- Shorts and skirts must be fingertip length
- Shirts and blouses must have sleeves. (No spaghetti straps, tube tops, tank tops, crop tops, etc.)
- Heels on shoes may be no higher than 1.5 inches.
- No flip flops, and all shoes must have a back or a back strap.
- No headgear – hoodies, hat, or bandanas. (Unless, of course, for religious purposes.) No sunglasses.
- No clothing that is revealing (too short, cut out, etc.) or too tight
- No garments that have writing or images that are inflammatory, hateful, or in violation of the Core Values or otherwise inappropriate.
- No garments that denote gang affiliations or is inappropriate for a school setting.
- No hoop earrings

Students are not required to participate on Out of Uniform Days. If they are not interested or do not have the specific attire required, students are to wear the school uniform. Out of uniform days are not at the discretion of students but will be announced by a school administrator.

Attire for “Career Days”

Students should dress in the attire of the career they are most interested in. this could include scrubs for doctors or nurses, team uniforms for those who would like to be athletes, suits or tailored dresses for those who would like to go into business, etc. If in doubt as to the appropriate attire, the student should consult with his or her advisor. Students must adhere to the other guidelines for out-of-uniform days. Students are not required to participate. If they are not interested or do not have the specific attire required, students will wear the uniform appropriate for that day.

Attire for Dressing as a “Professional”

Students are to dress professionally, wearing either dress shirts, suits/jackets, and slacks; or wearing tailored blouses and skirts/tailored dresses. No high heels or open shoes. Students must adhere to the other guidelines for out-of-uniform days. Students are not required to participate. If they are not interested or do not have the specific attire required, students will wear the uniform appropriate for that day.

Attire at School Events

Students should attend all school sponsored events and trips in appropriate attire. The school will announce the appropriate attire to students prior to the events.

The school reserves the right to call a parent or guardian to pick up a child who is deemed to be dressed inappropriately at any time.

5. RESPECT FOR/CARE OF LINK

All students will be expected to care for their school building by pitching in and helping to keep it clean and neat. Students will be responsible for keeping their community clean by sweeping, washing boards, emptying the trash, and other jobs. It is expected that Linkers will cooperate and participate in these jobs. We believe that it is important for students to learn to care for their school and that this kind of work builds responsibility. Students are also expected to care for school property. Items that could be used to deface property are forbidden in school, such as spray paint, colored hairspray, nail polish, large permanent markers, chewing gum, etc. Students who are responsible for damaging school property will be asked to pay for the repairs or replacement and will be subject to disciplinary action.

6. ACCEPTABLE VOICE LEVELS IN THE BUILDING

In order to provide a good learning environment, students are expected to maintain voice levels throughout the building as follows:

| Level Number | Level Description | Examples |
|--------------|---------------------|---|
| 0 | Silence | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• During exams, tests, silent reading times• While doing independent work in class• As a member of an audience• During circle• In line outside a teacher's classroom, etc.• In hallways• In the library• During drills or emergency situations |
| 1 | Whispering | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conferencing with a teacher or peer during class time• Doing group work in class, etc. |
| 2 | Conversational Tone | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In the cafeteria• During class discussion• Answering questions, speaking to an adult, etc. |
| 3 | Loud Tone/Shouting | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• At pep rallies and special events, if told by adults that it is appropriate• During recess |

7. MORNING CIRCLE

Morning Circle is an important part of Link's culture. It marks the beginning of the day and brings together members of the community. Students and faculty/advisors/staff form a large circle around the perimeter of the room, grouped by Team. Morning Circle includes a brief greeting and address by the School Culture Leader, Principal, Head of School, faculty members or students; announcements; brief recognition and celebration of successes and achievements both in and out of the classroom; or presentation/addresses by guests. Students who arrive late or who are out-of-uniform are required to address the whole school community, by taking responsibility for their behavior or actions in relation to Link's Core Values.

8. DISMISSAL

School dismissal will be at 4:10 pm for all students each day, unless otherwise noted on the school calendar.

Students who do not have meetings, detentions, tutoring, study halls, etc. must leave school grounds by 4:20 pm, or 1:00 pm on an early dismissal day. Parents are asked, if picking up their children, to be prompt and pick up no later than 4:20 pm. (See Pick Up and Drop Off, p. 8.)

Once a student leaves the building, he/she will not be allowed to reenter unless he/she has permission from a staff member or a security guard. This includes leaving the building to hang out with friends, purchase ice cream from street vendors, or go to the store. Students are discouraged from going to local stores, etc.

Students are not allowed to leave the school premises or building after being dropped off, except when they are being picked up by a parent or authorized person at dismissal.

Students are strongly encouraged to go immediately home and should not stop at stores or restaurants before doing so. Parents of students in grade 5 will complete a form designating dismissal instructions for their child. See Addendum B School Policy 8601.

9. HALL AND STAIRWAY BEHAVIOR

Systems and procedures are in place to support strong instruction and a positive school climate, including systems for transitions throughout the school. Students are expected to walk at a Voice Level 0 and orderly in a single file line to and from classes, the cafeteria, and the outdoors, keeping to the right of the hall or staircase.

There will be no loitering between classes. There will be no pushing, shoving, running, or other potentially dangerous behavior. Students are to proceed to their next class, line up outside the classroom and follow the teacher's instructions. Failure to comply will result in disciplinary action.

Public displays of affection are prohibited on the school grounds and during school activities, whether at the school building or not. Students violating this policy will face immediate disciplinary action.

10. CAFETERIA BEHAVIOR

The cafeteria is our community's eating place away from home. Systems and procedures are in place to support a positive and orderly environment. Students should exhibit good manners. Students are to remain seated during the meal and speak in conversational tones (Voice Level 2). Yelling, running and excessive playing is unacceptable. Students are expected to take care of the space by clearing off their tables, wiping them, and sweeping the area.

11. EMERGENCY SITUATIONS AND PREPAREDNESS DRILLS

Link will conduct drills for security, active shooter, evacuation, bomb threat, lockdown, and other emergencies in accordance with NJ State regulations. The procedures for each are outlined in the school's emergency management protocol housed in the Finance and Operations Office and displayed in each classroom. Teachers and staff will instruct students in the emergency procedures. It is vital that students and adults cooperate fully and remain silent during drills as well as real situations. Appropriate consequences will be issued for behaviors that do not meet expectations. If there are visitors in the building, visitors should be instructed by the closest staff member, to exit the building along with students and staff.

12. LAVATORY USE

Link aims to maximize instructional time and support student engagement and growth. To that end, students should use the bathroom at specific times during the school day when they will not miss instruction. In general, students will not be permitted to leave the classroom or gym during direct instruction time. Students may use the bathrooms during appropriate class times in keeping with the bathroom system: signing out and taking a pass, moving quickly to and from the closest bathroom, and re-entering the classroom without interruption. Parents may be contacted to discuss excessive laboratory usage.

Students must be mindful of their use of the bathrooms, using good personal hygiene and keeping the space clean. Disciplinary consequences will be issued to students who do not meet the expectations and who do not follow the systems/procedures.

13. LOCKERS and CUBBIES

Each student will be assigned a locker (Upper House) or open cubbie (Lower House) for books, coats, and personal belongings. The school encourages students and families to keep valuable belongings at home. Link is a community and is the expectation of the school that all members respect the property and belongings of each other. Nevertheless, the school is not responsible for personal belongings. Upper House students must bring a lock to secure their locker. The lockers are the property of the school and are subject to search.

14. HALL PASSES

Whenever a student is in the hall, he or she must have a pass providing permission to leave the classroom, gym, or cafeteria. Teachers will review pass procedures at the start of the year. Students are expected to return the pass to the classroom from which he or she took the pass. Failure to have a pass may result in disciplinary action.

15. COMPUTER/TECHNOLOGY POLICY

Link provides computer resources to enhance the educational experiences of its students. Students are expected to exercise their privilege to use these facilities and resources in a manner consistent with the educational objectives of the school and should be guided by the Core Values, so as to maximize learning and personal safety.

Specifically, students will receive Link email accounts and internet access, and will be trained in the proper use of both by Link teachers. The school has the right to monitor email and internet access. If a student abuses the privileges in any way, including, but not limited to hacking school records or others' accounts, tampering with others' access or school records, cyber-bullying, infringing on copyright laws, etc., he/she will receive consequences and may lose access. The Principal, in

consultation with appropriate staff, will determine if a student has abused his/her privileges. More information about this can be found in the "Link Community Charter School Acceptable Use Policy" that parents and students must sign each year in order that the student may have email and internet access. The policy is also posted on the Parent Page of Link's website.

16. FOOD/DRINK/GUM

Link Community Charter School encourages healthy eating and takes part in the federally subsidized school food program, following all of its guidelines. Therefore, generally, Link prohibits unhealthy/sugary drinks, snacks, and foods in the school building. Any such items/foods in the possession of students will be confiscated and taken to the Main Office. Students may retrieve the item from the Main Office at the end of the day. After repeated violations, students may receive disciplinary action.

Link Community Charter School also works to provide an environment that is safe for students with allergies. Parents and students should discuss any allergies and ways to prevent contamination and handle any resulting health issues. In light of allergies, it is important that students not share food with one another.

Under no circumstances may a student sell candy, beverages, or other food brought in from home, unless provided explicit approval by the Principal.

If a student comes to school with breakfast, he or she must eat it in the cafeteria during the assigned breakfast time, not in the gym or classrooms.

Parents may not send in food for birthday or other parties to be distributed inside the school.

17. INAPPROPRIATE LANGUAGE

Members of the Link community, including students, are expected to be respectful and kind to one another and the entire Link community, using the Core Values to guide their actions and words. The use of profanity and/or derogatory language is strictly prohibited and will result in immediate disciplinary action. Furthermore, disrespectful tone and language towards an adult or students is prohibited and will be subject to disciplinary action. The staff, faculty and advisors will use opportunities as they arise to help students navigate challenging situations so they make positive choices to demonstrate respectful language and attitudes.

18. FIGHTING/ASSAULT

Hitting and slapping, as well as "play fighting," are taken very seriously and Link Community Charter School believes in peaceful resolution to challenging situations and relationships. Violence and fighting of any kind, whether provoked or provoking, is prohibited and the result will be automatic suspension, and in extreme situations may result in an expulsion. Specific violations of this policy include but are not limited to: fighting/violence, conduct causing bodily injury, threats of fighting, violence, or serious bodily injury.

Students shall not act or threaten to act in such a way to cause emotional harm or physical injury to other students, any school employee or other persons on or off school grounds.

Students who feel threatened in any way must see either a faculty member or administrator immediately, rather than take matters into their own hands. Students shall not act or threaten to act in such a way to cause emotional harm or physical injury to other students, any school employee or other persons on or off school grounds.

Hitting and slapping, as well as "playfighting" are taken very seriously and are also strictly prohibited. These behaviors show a lack of respect and often lead (either immediately or at a later time) to more serious behavioral issues and challenges to relationships. Students displaying/participating in such behaviors will receive consequences, including suspension.

Any student who commits an assault on a teacher, administrator, or board member acting within the duties of his/her job or in a position of authority shall be immediately removed from the school pursuant to law. If such a situation occurs, the parent will be called immediately to pick up the child from the school and to be informed by the student's due process rights. The school will notify law enforcement of a possible violation of the New Jersey Code of Criminal Justice.

19. CUTTING CLASS

Any student who skips a class of any type, including advisory period, lunch, electives, special programs and assemblies, by either not showing up or leaving without permission, will be subject to disciplinary action.

20. BUYING/SELLING

Students may not sell any articles on school property without the permission of the Principal. They may not collect money or materials for their own purpose or for an organization to which they belong in school or on school property without the permission of the Principal.

21. LOST OR STOLEN PROPERTY

Link is not responsible for lost, stolen, damaged, or misplaced personal items on school property. This includes, but is not limited to coats, sweatshirts, uniforms, shoes, books, electronic devices, cell phones, money, etc. We discourage students from bringing valuable items and/or large sums of money to school. We strongly suggest that students label all of their belongings, including sweaters, sweatshirts, personal books, and other items so if found, the items can be returned to the owner.

All items that are found in the building are deposited in the Lost and Found containers located at the lower level landing at the bottom of the staircase in the north side of the building. Generally found jewelry or glasses are deposited in the Main Office. Parents are also welcomed to check the Lost and Found for their student's belongings after checking in at the Main Office and receiving direction to go there.

Stealing is a very serious offense and a violation of Link's core values and is subject to disciplinary action.

22. CELL PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The use of personal cell phones, iPods, toys and games, eBook readers, personal computers, and tablets is NOT allowed in school or on field trips. These personal items are often of significant monetary value and are not necessary in the school as students are provided whatever technology is needed for an instructional lesson or program. Personal items often distract and interrupt learning. If a student and his/her family determine that a cell phone is necessary for the child's commute to and from school, they agree to immediately upon entry into the school building, place it in a bag labeled with the child's name in the student's team phone bin as they enter the building. The cell phone bins will be retained in the school's security office until dismissal. If found in a student's possession, these items will be confiscated, and the student will be subject to disciplinary action. The item will be held by the Dean of Students until the parent comes to school to retrieve it.

THE SCHOOL IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR LOST OR STOLEN CELL PHONES OR OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND WILL NOT REPLACE THEM.

23. ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN STUDENTS AND STAFF

There are times when staff and students exchange emails, text messages, or phone calls in relation to homework/assignments, field trip preparation, athletic team communications, etc. It is expected that all communications via electronic means are conducted in a professional manner. If a student believes he/she has received an inappropriate communication from a staff member, the student or his/her parent should contact the Principal immediately. Staff members follow the same procedure if they receive an inappropriate communication from a student or parent.

24. STUDENTS NEEDING TO CALL PARENTS FROM LINK

If a student needs to call a parent before or after school, he or she may ask permission to use the school phone in the Main Office, rather than risk the consequences of using his/her cell phone. If a student needs to call home during the school day, he or she must have a pass from the classroom teacher to go to the Main Office to make the call. Students may not make calls to anyone other than their parents or guardians.

25. WEAPONS

Weapons of any kind are not permitted at Link. Any student found wearing or bringing any weapon to school will be immediately reported to the police, who will go to the school to retrieve the weapon. The student's name will be submitted to the police and the parents will be informed. The school may press charges as well. The school will act pursuant to the Link policies and state law and discipline rubric and the student may be subject to expulsion.

26. SUSPICION OF DRUG/ALCOHOL USE AND SALE

The use or possession of drugs or alcohol is prohibited. Students violating this policy are subject to serious disciplinary consequences, including expulsion.

Any student suspected of using drugs or alcohol will be requested by the administration to go for drug/alcohol testing. The student's parent/guardian will be called to take the student for testing. Failure to comply with this request may result in expulsion. Should testing be positive for such use, the student will be required to participate in counseling and may be subject to disciplinary action.

Students in possession of illegal substances or suspected of selling illegal substances will be reported to the police and may be subject to expulsion.

The possession or use of tobacco of any kind is prohibited. "Tobacco" includes any product containing tobacco that is smoked, chewed, inhaled or placed against the gums. Students violating this policy will be subject to disciplinary action.

Link's policies and procedures on Substance Abuse can be found in the Board Policies and Procedures Manual Policy-5530 SUBSTANCE ABUSE in the school's Main Office and posted on Link's website.

27. THREATS, HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, AND BULLYING

Link Community Charter School is committed to providing a safe and non-discriminatory school environment, free of threats, intimidation, bullying, hostility, or harassment. We expect and require our students to cooperate in maintaining that environment at all times by living the core values.

Students are prohibited from making statements and/or threatening through verbal, written, technological, or any other means that physical or emotional harm may come to another person or to the institution.

In addition, Link strictly forbids the harassment or bullying of any student by another student (or employee). This prohibition applies specifically to harassment or bullying based on race, sex, disability, religion, national origin, citizenship, or sexual orientation. Such harassment consists of words or conduct that would not have occurred but for the particular characteristic or status and is severe or pervasive enough to make a reasonable person with the same protected characteristic as the student subjected to such harassment (i.e., the same race, religion, sexual orientation, etc.) believe that the school environment is hostile or abusive.

This includes words, signs, jokes, pranks, intimidation, physical contact, or violence based on race, disability, religion, national origin, citizenship, or sexual orientation.

Bullying, harassment and intimidation are defined as any gesture, written, verbal, physical act, or electronic communication that is reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory handicap, or by any other distinguishing characteristic, that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, on a school bus, or off school property and that:

- a reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, will have the effect of harming a student or damaging the student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to his person or damage to his property; or
- has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students in such a way as to cause substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of school; or
- creates a hostile educational environment by interfering with the student's education or by severely or pervasively causing person or emotional harm to the student.

School employees (or contracted service providers) who have witnessed or have reliable information that a student has been subject to harassment, intimidation, or bullying must verbally report the information to the School Principal on the same day they discover the information. The school employee and the Principal must complete a written report within two school days of the initial verbal report. All staff members are immune from civil liability for reports made in good faith. Reprisal and retaliation are prohibited against any person who reports acts of student harassment, intimidation or bullying. Teachers or students may report anonymously by placing a written report in the Principal's mailbox. However, formal disciplinary action may not be based solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

The Principal shall inform the parents/guardians of all students involved that an incident of HIB has been reported. The Principal may discuss, as appropriate, the availability of counseling and other intervention services. An investigation must be initiated by the Principal within one day of incident being reported verbally and the investigation must be conducted by the school anti-bullying specialist. The Principal may appoint additional personnel to assist, if necessary. The investigation must be prompt, thorough, and efficient. The investigation will permit reports that are oral, written or electronic.

The anti-bullying specialist's investigation must be completed within ten (10) school days of the written incident report. The school anti-bullying specialist may amend the original report to reflect information anticipated but not yet received by the end of the ten (10) day period.

Teachers and staff members must always monitor for further incidents of bullying, harassment or intimidation. Warn students of the consequences of continued behavior.

The school anti-bullying specialist's investigation results must be reported to the Head of School within two school days of completion. The Head of School may take or recommend appropriate action, including providing intervention services, establishing training programs to reduce HIB or enhance school climate, imposing discipline, and/or ordering counseling.

The results of the investigation and action taken or recommended by the Head of School must be reported to the Board no later than its next meeting following the completion of the investigation.

Information about the investigation must be provided to parents/guardians of students who are parties to the investigation. This report must be in writing within five (5) school days after reporting the results to the Board and must include the nature of the investigation, whether Link found evidence of harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying, whether discipline was imposed or if services were provided to address the harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying. A parent/guardian may request a hearing before the Board after receiving the information. The Board hearing must be held within ten (10) days of the parental request. The hearing is to be conducted during executive session to protect confidentiality. The school anti-bullying specialist may testify about the incident, recommendations for discipline or services, and any programs instituted to reduce such incidents.

The Board must issue, at its next meeting following the receipt of the report, a written decision affirming, rejecting, or modifying the Head of School's decision. The parent/guardian may appeal the Board's decision to the Commissioner of Education within 90 days of issuance of the board's decision. Please refer to Policy and Regulation 5512 Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying, which is available on the Board website, for further clarification.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is also prohibited. This can consist of unwelcomed flirtations or sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. It can take many forms, including foul or obscene language; unwelcomed sexually oriented comments, "kidding" or "practical jokes"; or showing, displaying or circulating sexually explicit objects, signs, pictures, or e-mails. Sexual harassment, however, is not necessarily sexual in nature. Comments that demean a person because of his or her gender can also be harassing. Sexual harassment is prohibited whether the harasser is male or female, and whether the harassment is opposite gender or same-gender harassment.

All students have a duty to keep Link Community Charter School free of threats, intimidation, bullying and harassment. Any student who becomes aware of such conduct, whether by witnessing the incident, being told of it, or being subjected to it, must report it to a teacher or school administrator. Any complaint or suspected incident will be investigated in as confidential a manner as possible, and without retaliation against the student making the complaint. Link will take appropriate disciplinary action against any person(s) who violates the policy, up to and including immediate suspension or expulsion. The school's Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Policy 5512 and process/form for reporting an alleged incident can be found on the school's website.

28. DATING VIOLENCE

Link strives to provide a safe and civil environment so students can learn. Victims of dating violence at school may suffer academically and their safety may be in jeopardy. Dating violence can be physical, emotional, verbal, or sexual. It can be

a pattern of behavior and can be done in person or via technology. Staff is required to report any perceived instance of dating violence at school, inside or outside the building, or on field trips to the Principal. An investigation, as outlined in Link's policies and regulations will be undertaken immediately. Discipline will be implemented, and remedial actions undertaken in compliance with the school's code of conduct. The topic of dating violence is included in the 7th and 8th grade health curriculum. For more information please see School Policy 5519.

29. SUSPECTED GANG ACTIVITY

Gang activity is disruptive to the school and potentially dangerous for students and staff, If it is determined that unacceptable activities or conduct was committed by students representing a gang or by students that may be representing a gang, appropriate disciplinary action will be assigned, and the student's/students' parents as well as law enforcement will be notified immediately.

30. SECURITY

School safety is of utmost importance; therefore, all members of the community must exercise caution. While visitors are welcome, they must be granted access to the building by the security team, Main Office staff, or school leadership. Entry and exit must occur through the main school doors or as directed by staff. Students are never to open the door for anyone. The bell or a knock at the door must be attended to by a staff member. Anyone entering the school building who is not a current student or staff member MUST report immediately to the Main Office.

Security guards employed by the school are on duty whenever students are in the building. Students, staff, parents, and visitors are expected to follow their directions and use the Core Values in all interactions with them.

Electronic surveillance cameras are located throughout and outside the building and are accessed if a violation is expected to have occurred. By a mutual agreement, Link will share the recordings on the cameras with local law enforcement if deemed appropriate. The camera locations are marked with signs. See Addendum A, School Policy 7441.

31. VISITORS

Anyone who is not a current student or a current staff member must report to the Main Office immediately, where they will sign in and receive a visitor's pass, before receiving direction from the office staff. This includes parents and former students or staff.

Students may not bring non-Link students with them onto school grounds without the prior permission of the administration.

Alumni may only visit Link to perform community service or conduct business with prior permission from a school administrator. If they do not have prior permission, they will be asked to return home.

In cases of an emergency or preparedness drill, visitors will be asked to follow the closest teacher or administrator's direction.

32. SEARCHES

The school recognizes that a student's right of privacy may not be violated by unreasonable search and seizure, therefore no student be searched without reason or in an unreasonable manner.

A student and/or his/her personal possessions may be searched as authorized by school policy, with or without the student's consent, whenever there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the search is required to discover evidence of a violation of law or of school rules. Searches are conducted by the Principal or designee, except in exigent circumstances. The Principal will first solicit the consent of the student for the search but may proceed without. Whenever possible, a search will be conducted in the presence of the student, the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) or a representative of the parent(s) or legal guardian(s), and a teaching staff member other than the Principal. Except in exigent circumstances, an intrusive search of a student's person or intimate personal belongings shall be conducted by an adult of the student's gender.

Under no circumstances shall any student be subjected to a strip search or a body cavity search. The school staff can inspect student lockers, desks, etc., at any time, without permission. For more information please see Policy 5770 Student Right of Privacy which can be found in the Main Office.

33. ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE IN THE SCHOOL BUILDING AND ON SCHOOL GROUNDS

The Board of Trustees authorizes the use of electronic surveillance systems in the school building and on school grounds to enhance the safety and security for school staff, students, community members, and other building occupants and to protect the school's building and grounds. The content produced by the surveillance system under certain circumstances may be considered a student record, and if so, it will be subject to the Board of Trustees policy and regulations regarding confidential student records. If the content of the surveillance system becomes the subject of a disciplinary proceeding, it shall be treated like other evidence in the proceeding. Please see Policy 7441 for more information. See Addendum A, School Policy 7441.

34. RIGHTS OF STUDENTS

Every student has the right to attend a free public school that has a safe and secure environment that is conducive to learning. The school will provide all students with nurture, counsel, and custodial care appropriate to the pupil's ages and maturity levels. The school will respect the right of each pupil to equal treatment and equal access to the educational program, the due process of law, freedom of expression and association, and privacy of his/her own thoughts.

Attendant on the rights so guaranteed are certain responsibilities, which include respect for the rights of others, obedience to school authority and compliance with policies and regulations of the school.

If at any time a student feels either a person or a group of persons is violating his or her rights, the student should talk to a person of authority such as a teacher, staff member, or an administrator, or communicate through a parent or guardian to school personnel.

CODE OF CONDUCT/DISCIPLINE

1. DISCIPLINE PHILOSOPHY

Link Community Charter School's mission is to provide an excellent education that will foster the development of the students' "minds, bodies and spirits" so they can succeed now and in the future. To ensure success, both academic and personal, students need a learning environment that fuels creativity, learning, and joy, while providing a firm structure for order and clear expectations for appropriate behavior as well as guidance and support to make positive decisions. Additionally, the school is committed to providing a physically and emotionally safe environment for students and staff. To accomplish this, Link Community Charter School will administer discipline that, in a caring and nurturing way, helps students learn how to contribute to their personal success and to the well-being of the community during school, on school property, or during school sponsored activities. The school utilizes the strategy of Restorative Justice to handle conflict between students or between students and staff. Restorative Justice focuses on repairing harm through inclusive processes that engage all those affected by an issue through guided conversation. It includes taking responsibility, problem solving and mediation, thereby providing a learning opportunity and consequences rather than just punishment.

The school believes that every child has the potential for success given time, nurture and attention. Staff understands that students have different personalities and come to the school with different backgrounds and school experiences. Staff will work to understand each child and find ways to support him or her, so that students understand and exhibit the school's Core Values in all they do. Discipline will be administered fairly, in keeping with the school's policies, including the Discipline Rubric. There will be room for consideration of a student's personal circumstances, the severity of the incident, the student's attitude which includes the student's ownership of the behavior and willingness to change, and the student's discipline record. To maintain a positive and productive atmosphere and to encourage exemplary behavior, the school will adopt a balanced approach to student behavior, one that rewards good behaviors and has consequence for poor behavior. All students will be treated with dignity and respect, and staff expects the same from students. The School's Core Values will be the foundation of every conversation regarding discipline

2. DISCIPLINE SYSTEM OVERVIEW

Link's Discipline System begins with the expectation that each student uses the Core Values to guide his/her conduct (actions and words) and that each student will reflect on his/her behavior and make the changes necessary for his/her positive growth and development. Core Values are taught and reinforced every day at the school.

The Dean of Students oversees Link's Discipline System, with the support of the Assistant Dean of Students for the Lower

House, to support a strong school culture.

Goals of the Discipline System

- Motivate students to perform well;
- Build a strong sense of community;
- Hold students accountable for their actions by keeping the Core Values in mind; and
- Celebrate students' strengths and identify ways to correct deficiencies.

Disciplinary Consequences

The sequence of disciplinary consequences follows the “progressive discipline” model and begins with minimal actions, which can be taken and ends with maximum action, which can be administered. This listing does not imply that a “step by step” progression of increasing severity needs to be used by the school staff in dealing with the violation.

3. LINK’S THREE-STEP DISCIPLINE SYSTEM

Step 1: When a student engages in inappropriate behavior, the school will begin the ladder of intervention, unless the action is blatant, in which case the student will be given immediate disciplinary consequences.

Step 2: Upon a second instance, the student will receive a “5-minute Reflection” where he/she will self-reflect silently on the behavior and complete the “Self-Reflection Form”, in the rear of the classroom in a space designated “Reflection Area.” The completed form will be sent home for parent/guardian signature and is to be returned the next school day to the dean.

Step 3: If the behavior continues or is serious, the student will be asked to go to the Dean/Assistant Dean of Students via the Main Office with a green hall pass. The dean will determine the appropriate consequences in consultation with the teacher, student, and the Discipline Rubric. A Restorative Justice Conference may be held as a follow up.

During the Restorative Justice Conference, the student meets with the teacher and dean to discuss the incident and develop strategies to prevent unacceptable behavior in the future. The student will complete a Mandatory Student Conference Form to be signed by the parent and returned to school immediately.

If the Mandatory Student Conference is unsuccessful and/or the student continues inappropriate behavior, or if the behavior rises to a higher level, a Mandatory Parent Conference will be scheduled pursuant to the Discipline Rubric. The student, his/her advisor, the dean, the teacher involved, and other staff members may be asked to be present for this meeting with the parents.

4. DISCIPLINE RUBRIC

See next page for the rubric.

DISCIPLINE RUBRIC 2019-2020

Revised 09.03.19

| CATEGORY 1 | First Violation | Second Violation | Third Violation | Fourth Violation |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public display of affection Inappropriate language Failure to return purple envelope\homework Minor Misconduct Eating food/chewing gum in school | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Verbal warning and inform student to change behavior Issue demerits Call home | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issue demerits Call home 5-minute reset/ reflection Recess Detention (gr. 5&6) Teacher Detention (gr. 7&8) Call home when appropriate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issue demerits Call home Administrative Detention Level 1 Call home Restorative Justice Conference Parent Conference | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issue demerits Call home Administrative Detention Level 2 Administrative Assignment Restorative Justice Conference Parent Conference |
| CATEGORY 2 | First Violation | Second Violation | Third Violation | Fourth Violation |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cell phone possession or use in school Dress Code violation Disrupting the educational process (level 1) Cheating/plagiarism Dishonesty Electronic device/technology violation Forgery Insubordinate/ disrespectful behavior Inappropriate behavior on a bus Minor Core Value violation Recess horseplay Slapping on back of neck, pushing, "milking" | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issue demerits Call home Recess Detention (gr. 5&6) Teacher Detention (gr. 7&8) 5-minute reset/reflection | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issue demerits Call home Administrative Detention Level 1 Parent Conference | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issue demerits Call home Administrative Detention Level 2 Administrative Assignment Meeting with Social Worker Restorative Justice Conference Parent Conference | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issue demerits Call home Administrative Project Restorative Justice Conference Parent Conference Meeting with Social Worker 1 Day ISS |
| CATEGORY 3 | First Violation | Second Violation | Third Violation | Fourth Violation |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disrupting the educational process (level 2) Slapping, kicking, punching Minor Threats/harassment Cutting class Skipping detention/conference Minor Core Value Violation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issue demerits Call home Administrative Assignment Restorative Justice Conference Parent Conference Meeting with Social Worker | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issue demerits Call home Administrative Detention Level 1 Administrative Assignment Restorative Justice Conference Parent Conference Meeting with Social Worker | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issue demerits Call home Administrative Detention Level 2 Administrative Project Restorative Justice Conference Parent Conference Meeting with Social Worker Conference with School Resource Officer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issue demerits Call home 1-3 day ISS or OSS Administrative Project Restorative Justice Conference /Parent Conference Meeting with Social Worker Conference with School Resource Officer |
| CATEGORY 4 | First Violation | Second Violation | Third Violation | Fourth Violation |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major Physical fighting and major hitting Bullying/cyber bullying* Inappropriate use of social media* Major Core Value violation Theft, vandalism, defacing school property Major threats/harassment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issue demerits Call home Administrative Detention Level 2 Administrative Assignment Restorative Justice Conference Parent Conference Meeting with Social Worker | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issue demerits Call home 1-3 day ISS or OSS Administrative Project Restorative Justice Conference Parent Conference Meeting with Social Worker Conference with School Resource Officer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issue demerits Call home 3-5 day OSS Administrative Project Restorative Justice Conference Parent Conference Meeting with Social Worker Conference with School Resource Officer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issue demerits Call home 5-8 day OSS Restorative Justice Conference Parent Conference Meeting with Social Worker Conference with School Resource Officer |
| CATEGORY 5 ** | First Violation | Second Violation | Third Violation | Fourth Violation |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weapons possession Terrorist threats Drugs/Alcohol, use and/or possession Gang activity/violence Dating violence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5-10 day OSS Administrative Project Restorative Justice Conference Parent Conference Police Notification | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Automatic 10 day OSS Meeting with Social Worker Parent Conference Police Notification Counseling | | |

*Inappropriate usage/violations of social media outside the school but affecting any Link students are included as they impact the learning environment.

**Category 3, 4 and 5 violations may result in law enforcement intervention. Depending on the situation, more significant consequences than listed above may result.

Administrative Detention Level 1 – After school
Administrative Assignment – Essay

Administrative Detention Level 2 – Saturday
Administrative Project – Research project

OOS=Out of School Suspension
ISS= In School Suspension

5. MONITORING STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Link will utilize *DeansList* (software system) to record student behavior and communicate about behavior with students and parents. The programs are designed to teach students self-discipline by being aware that in life there are rewards and consequences for their actions. They will also help reinforce the school's Core Values and give administrators, teachers and parents a quick report of student conduct from week to week.

DeansList works as follows:

- Students will start each week (Friday through the following Thursday at 4 pm) with 100 points.
- Students will gain or lose points according to their adherence to Link's code of conduct. Points will be added or deducted daily by teachers, administrators, and other staff members as they observe/experience behaviors to be celebrated or to receive consequences.
- Students must maintain a point balance at 80 or above.
- Each Friday, students will receive the *DeansList* weekly behavior report in their Parent Communications Envelope to take home to their parents. Parents are required sign the report and return it to school on Monday via the Parent Communications Envelope.

Examples of Reasons for Demerit and Merit Points

Demerits

- *Respect*: being rude or mean to peers, being disrespectful to adults
- *Responsibility*: late to class, late to school, missing a parent signature, unprepared for class, unexcused absence, improper school uniform
- *Honesty*: inappropriate apology, lying, forging, theft, plagiarism
- *Caring*: unkind response, inattentiveness, giving up
- *Doing One's Best*: missing or incomplete homework, disruptive or off-task in class
- *Following Directions*: chewing gum, eating or drinking without permission, defiance

Merits

- *Respect*: shows school pride, maintains calm in high pressure situation
- *Responsibility*: takes initiative, cleans up without being asked, leads community or team, solves problems
- *Honesty*: upholds truth
- *Caring*: welcomes guests, shows kindness, cheers for others, stands up for others in a positive way, tutors others
- *Doing One's Best*: speaks persuasively, enriches a discussion, perseveres, takes risks
- *Following Directions*: keeps order, encouraging others to follow school rules, listens and responds appropriately

Celebrations of Positive Behavior

Students with the highest point balances and students with the most improved in point balance will be celebrated weekly.

Students who consistently meet expectations may be offered special events, special trips, parties, dress down passes and other rewards as determined by the Dean of Students.

Student teams meeting monthly expectations for hall transitions, adherence to the uniform policy, homework completion, and return of parent communications envelopes will be celebrated in the school wide Panther Cup competition.

6. DETENTION

Administrative Detention

It is important that our students know that they are expected to live the Core Values and the Student Code of Conduct at all times. If a student breaks a Core Value, the Dean of Students or another staff member may issue a Mandatory Detention for inappropriate behavior, including but not limited to:

- Blatant disrespect
- Disobedience

- Cutting class
- Disruptive behavior which impacts the educational process
- Ongoing discipline issues (regularly failing to meet expectations) as reflected in *DeansList* points falling below 75 points or more/Consistently negative Daily Behavior Reports

The day and time of detentions will be determined by the Dean of Students. Parents will be notified when a student is required to serve detention.

Teacher Issued and Monitored Detention

Teachers will have their own expectations and procedures in their classrooms. A teacher may issue a detention for an infraction in the classroom, including but not limited to failure to complete class work or homework, lack of preparedness, excessive talking, etc. Teachers will require the student to remain in the teacher's classroom at a specifically appointed time of the day, at the teacher's discretion. Teachers will call parents if students receive a teacher issued detention.

Detention

Lower House: Students who do not hand in homework or do not have their homework signed, are out of school uniform, or do not return the Purple Communications envelope will receive a Recess Detention. This detention removes a student from recess but is a simple consequence that builds accountability and should serve to remind the student of the importance of meeting the related expectation.

Upper House: Students who do not hand in homework or do not have their homework signed, are out of school uniform, or do not return the Purple Communications envelope will receive an Administrative Detention. Administrative Detention is generally from 4:15 -5:15 pm.

7. SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

Link recognizes that even the temporary removal of a student from class or from school is a severe sanction and one that cannot be imposed without due process. Expulsions are only considered in extreme situations.

A student may be suspended or expelled from Link Community Charter School based on criteria determined by the LCCS Board of Trustees, which are consistent with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:37-2 and approved by the commissioner as part of the school's charter. The Dean of Students may recommend suspension/expulsion to the Principal and Head of School, who may then recommend student expulsion to the Board of Trustees.

Extreme violations or repeated minor violations will be considered grounds for suspension or expulsion. The Link Community Charter School will apply disciplinary action for conduct infractions in situations related to school activities and/or attendance and occurring on school property or buses.

The Link Community Charter School has adopted N.J.S.A 18A:37-2: causes for suspension or expulsion of pupils. These include:

- a. Continued and willful disobedience;
- b. Open defiance of the authority of any teacher or person, having authority over him;
- c. Conduct of such character as to constitute a continuing danger to the physical well-being of other pupils;
- d. Physical assault upon another pupil;
- e. Taking, or attempting to take, personal property or money from another pupil, or from his presence, by means of force or fear;
- f. Willfully causing, or attempting to cause, substantial damage to school property;
- g. Participation in an unauthorized occupancy by any group of pupils or others of any part of any school or other building owned by any school, and failure to leave such school or other facility promptly after having been directed to do so by the principal or other person then in charge of such building or facility;
- h. Incitement which is intended to and does result in unauthorized occupation by any group of pupils or others of any part of a school or other facility owned by any school;
- i. Incitement which is intended to and does result in truancy by other pupils;
- j. Knowing possession or knowing consumption without legal authority of alcoholic beverages or controlled dangerous substances on school premises, or being under the influence of intoxicating liquor or controlled

- dangerous substances while on school premises; and
- k. Harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

Assault by a student on a teacher, administrator, board member or other employee acting in the performance of his/her duties or acting in a position of authority will result in immediate suspension from school. Due process proceedings will follow pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:37-2.1. Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:37-8, any student who is convicted or adjudicated delinquent for possession of a firearm or a crime while armed with a firearm or found knowingly in possession of a firearm on school property, a school bus, or at a school-sponsored function shall be immediately removed from the school's regular education program. Due process proceedings will follow.

Teachers will refer to the Dean of Students a student with serious violations or repeated minor violations. The Dean will then arrange a meeting between the parents, student and the Principal to determine disciplinary action. Though suspension and expulsion are considered "last resorts," they will be applied consistently to ensure that the behavior does not impede the ability of the other children to function successfully or safely.

Violations deemed serious or habitual will be addressed with the following steps:

Suspension

In-school Suspension: Though students will continue to receive instruction, staff will place them in another classroom or location designated by the Dean of Students. Students will be separated from the regular classroom but will always have adult supervision.

Out of School Suspension: Where deemed necessary, students will be suspended for a time period depending on the severity of the infraction. Short term suspensions are for one, but not more than 10 consecutive school days and long-term suspension can be a suspension for more than 10 days. The Dean of Students will notify the parents in advance and they will be required to meet with the Dean and the Principal before their child can return to school.

When the determination is made to suspend a student, the Dean of Students or Principal will inform the student as well as call the parent/guardian and send a letter home with the student outlining expectations and action to be taken.

Before a student is readmitted to school after a suspension, a parent conference must be held and the student must complete a required assignment.

Disciplinary actions will have no bearing on the student's academic standing, except in cases of academic dishonesty.

Expulsion

Violations deemed extremely serious or habitual will be addressed with expulsion if the Head of School, in consultation with the Principal, determines that all other options have been exhausted without the desired effect, or the expulsion is mandated by law. A conference will be arranged with the board president, the Head of School, the parents and the student. The conference could result in a recommendation to the Board of Trustees for student expulsion.

8. BEHAVIORAL PROBATION

Students who have been suspended may be placed on behavioral probation. A student on behavioral probation will lose certain privileges such as participation in extra-curricular activities and programs including athletics and school trips. He/she will have to earn the privileges back over a period of time. A student will have to demonstrate improved behavior over a period of time to be removed from probation. Parents of students placed on behavioral probation will be notified by letter and a conference will be scheduled.

9. SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

A student with disabilities may be suspended or expelled from the Link Community Charter School based on criteria determined by the board of trustees, which are consistent with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 6A:14-2.8 and approved by the commissioner as part of the school's charter. The head of school, after teacher consultation, may recommend student expulsion.

Disciplinary action initiated by the board which involves removal to an interim alternative educational setting,

suspension for more than 10 school days in a school year or expulsion of a student with a disability will be conducted in accordance with 20 U.S.C. §1415 (k), as amended and supplemented.

Except where contradicted by statute, the head of school may order the removal of a student with a disability for disciplinary reasons from his or her current educational placement to an interim alternative educational setting, another setting, or a suspension for up to 10 consecutive or cumulative school days in a school year. Such suspensions are subject to the same board procedures as non-disabled students.

However, at the time of removal, the head of school will forward written notification and a description of the reasons for such action to the student's case manager.

Removal of a student with a disability from the student's current educational placement for disciplinary reasons will constitute a change of placement if the removal is for more than 10 consecutive school days or the student is subjected to a series of short-term removals that constitute a pattern because they cumulate to more than 10 school days in a school year and because of factors such as the length of each removal, the total amount of time the student is removed and the proximity of the removals to one another. The head of school in consultation with the student's case manager will determine whether a series of short-term removals constitutes a pattern that indicates need for a change of placement.

The Link Community Charter School Board will provide, to the extent necessary, services to enable a student with a disability who has been removed from his or her current placement for more than 10 cumulative or consecutive school days in the school year, to progress appropriately in the general education curriculum and advance appropriately toward achieving the goals set out in the student's IEP. The extent to which services are necessary will be determined by school officials, in consultation with the student's special education teacher and case manager when it is determined that a series of short-term removals is not a change of placement, and by the student's IEP team when a removal constitutes a change of placement, and it is determined that the behavior is not a manifestation of the student's disability.

In the case of a removal for drug or weapons offenses, or because the student caused a serious bodily injury under 20 U.S.C. § 1415(k) and its implementing regulations, at 34 CFR §§ 300.1 et seq., or a removal by an administrative law judge for dangerousness consistent with 20 U.S.C. § 1415(k) and its implementing regulations at 34 CFR §§ 300.1 et seq., the charter school board will provide services to the student with a disability consistent with 20 U.S.C. § 1415(k) and its implementing regulations at 34 CFR §§ 300.1 et seq.

10. ACTS OF HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION OR BULLYING

Pursuant to the School Policy 5512, the school will conduct a thorough and complete investigation for reports of violations and complaints which either identify harassment, intimidation, or bullying (HIB) or describe behaviors that indicate HIB within the scope of the definition of HIB under the Anti Bullying Bill of Rights Act, N.J.S.A. 18A:37-14. The school requires anyone who suspects an act of HIB may have been committed, to promptly reports the incident. The consequences of bullying may be varied according to the nature of the behavior, the developmental age of the student and the student's history of problem behavior. The consequences may include but are not limited to:

- Admonishment
- Temporary removal from the classroom
- Deprivation of privileges
- Classroom or administrative detention
- Referral to the Dean of Students
- In-school suspension, during the week or on the weekend
- Out of school suspension
- Reports to law enforcement or other legal action
- Expulsion
- Removal from school sponsored program

Remedial Measures

Remedial measures will be designed to help the student correct behavior, prevent another occurrence and provide support for the victim of the act, and take corrective action for documented systematic problems related to these issues.

11. OVERALL SCHOOL CONSEQUENCES

Link Community Charter School is a community where the actions of one or a few impact all members in both positive and detrimental ways. In keeping with its philosophy of community, Link retains the right to keep the overall student body or a portion thereof after school and to remove certain privileges when students have demonstrated negative, disrespectful or difficult behavior. Students will not be kept beyond 4:25 PM without notifying parents/guardians.

12. STUDENT RIGHTS WITH REGARD TO DISCIPLINE

Students subject to discipline shall be informed of their rights pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.1(c)3.i. through vii that include:

- Advance notice of behaviors that will result in suspension and expulsion
- Education that supports students' development into productive citizens
- Attendance in a safe and secure school environment
- Due process and appeal procedures pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:3-1.3 through 1.17, N.J.A.C. 6A:4 and, where applicable, N.J.A.C. 6A:14-2.7 and 2.8 and N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.2 through 7.5.
- Parent notification consistent with the policies and procedures established pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-6.2(b)3, N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.1, and N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.2 through 7.8; and
- Protections as provided by Federal and State laws. (For more, see Policy and Regulation 5600, Pupil Discipline/Code of Conduct posted on the school's website.)

STUDENT SERVICES

1. ADVISORY SYSTEM

Each student is provided an advisor who is a member of Link's faculty, staff or administration. The advisor serves as a resource to the student and a communication conduit for families. The advisor-advisee relationship provides great strength and guidance to our students and is developed through both community time (homeroom) and two advisory periods per week. Advisory period consists of:

- Individual conferences between the student and advisor and
- Discussions and activities on various topics.

We believe that advisory time builds community spirit and allegiance; helps students develop a deeper understanding of Link Community Charter School's Core Values and encourages greater practice of these values; assists students with any individual plans for academic/behavioral improvements or validates them on a job well done; and allows students to discuss pertinent topics by learning to express themselves publicly and by listening to others.

2. HIGH SCHOOL PLACEMENT: UPPER HOUSE

At Link, the faculty and administration are committed to preparing students for admission into an exceptional high school that best matches the students thus continuing on the path to college and lifelong learning. To this end, we work closely with parents and students to provide as many opportunities as we can for application to a variety of high schools.

Among the many efforts we make to assist students with high school placement are individual conferences with Link's Director of High School Placement; high school entrance exam test preparation; High School Night at Link Community Charter School; notification of outside high school open house dates; assistance with applications for admission to and scholarships for independent, Catholic, and public magnet high schools, Wight Foundation, NJ SEEDS, and A Better Chance.

The high school placement process will begin during 7th grade and Link's High School Placement Director will notify parents/guardians and students as to the schedule of events and provide all relevant information regarding the high school search and application process. Upper House students will take High School Placements/Testing Strategies. Students receive a Pass or Fail grade for High School Placement class.

It is most important for students and their families to understand that successful high school application is dependent upon the student maintaining good to excellent academic grades, very positive personal development reports, good to excellent entrance exam scores, meeting of all application and scholarship deadlines, and positive and diligent parental

involvement and effort in the process. Parents need to commit to working closely with Link and the schools to which their child applies in order that their child is accepted into his/her choice of school.

3. ATHLETICS

Link Community Charter School believes that athletics offer students the opportunity to develop talents, build important teamwork and personal skills, maintain physical fitness and prepare for participation in sports in high school. Link expects athletes to use the core values to guide actions and conduct on and off the field/court.

It is also expected that Link athletes keep their focus on academics, achieving a high level of academic performance. Students earning a grade lower than C in any class at progress report or report card time will be suspended from play until the grade is brought up to at least a C on the next formal report of grades, either the Progress Report or the Report Card.

Students participating in sports programs must be in attendance at school and on time on practice and competition days.

Upper House Athletics

The competitive sports offered at Link in a typical year depend on local conferences and leagues and the availability of coaches. The following may be offered: Flag Football (co-ed). Basketball (boys' and girls' teams), Volleyball and Soccer (co-ed.)

Students try-out for teams and commit to participation in practices and games while maintaining a strong academic and personal development record ("C" or better in all classes and "1" or "2" in core values).

Students must be conscious of their other interests and commitments and not overextend themselves. They will be offered many opportunities throughout the year to participate in extracurricular activities, including athletics and performing arts and must make decisions wisely and follow-through on commitments. To participate in interscholastic sports, students must provide a Pre-participation Physical Evaluation form prior to the first official practice of the sport season. Students accepted for interscholastic sports teams will be given a brochure on opioid use and sudden cardiac arrest and their parents will be required to complete a form acknowledging receipt of the brochures prior to the first official practice of the sport season.

Lower House Athletics

From time to time, afterschool intramural athletics or athletic clinics may be offered to Lower School students.

To participate, students must have a strong academic and personal development record ("C" or better in all classes and "1" or "2" in core values).

Other sports may be offered as available to students through partnerships with non-profit organizations and volunteers.

4. ELECTIVES AND CLUBS: UPPER HOUSE

Link offers its Upper House students a wide variety of electives that round out a Link education. Electives take place once a week and are considered a class. Attendance is mandatory, and students are expected to meet the expectations of their elective teachers and live the Core Values at all times.

Students make their selections (their top three choices) as requests, but interest and enrollment counts may result in a student not receiving his/her top choice. Every effort is made to get them into their second or third choice, if the first is not available. Nevertheless, students are expected to engage fully in the elective they are scheduled to take as an opportunity to stretch themselves.

Electives offerings often change from year to year. Electives offered in the past have included: newspaper, African dance, yoga, foreign language, film criticism, karate, photography, knitting, , chess, hip-hop, etc.

Participation in after school clubs, if offered, requires good academic and behavioral standing. These may take place during the elective period or afterschool.

Students who participate in after school or evening activities must be at school and on time on the day of those clubs or events.

5. OUTDOOR/ADVENTURE EDUCATION

Link works to develop leadership and teambuilding and create opportunities for self-challenge and cooperation. To do this, Link has partnered with Project U.S.E. (Urban Suburban Environments), an outdoor adventure non-profit education organization since 1970.

Each grade participates with increasing levels of complexity and challenge as they move from 5th to 8th grade. Eighth graders attend an overnight camping program and students in other grades participate in day activities and trips. These trips are an integral part of Link's program and all students are expected to participate. They are very important to a child's personal development and Link's goals of teaching cooperation, interdependence and respect for nature and the Earth.

Students who do not participate in these trips will be given assignments to complete.

6. TRIPS

Field trips provide the opportunity to experience something from the classroom in the "real world" in action and deepen students' understanding and knowledge of concepts and information.

Families may be asked to pay for part or all of the cost of a field trip for their child, though the school partners with non-profit organizations to make full participation for all students possible. No student will participate in a field trip unless a signed parent/guardian permission slip for the specific event is submitted to Link Community Charter School. The permission slip is to be returned to school via the Parent Communications Envelope, by fax, or scanned into an email. The school cannot accept verbal permission or notes from parents. Students who fail to return their permission slips will call their parents for pick up.

Any student with academic or behavioral issues may be precluded from participating in a trip. The Principal makes the final determination in these cases, based on input from Dean of Students and teachers.

Behavior on field trips is taken very seriously as any activities outside of school adds responsibility. Proper behavior according to the guidelines in this handbook must be adhered to by all students when on trips. Any misbehavior will result in disciplinary action.

7. HEALTH SERVICES/REQUIREMENTS

Each family will receive a Guide to Health Services manual upon registration. The manual contains the information below, and more, and forms that may be required.

New Jersey State law requires that all new and returning students have a medical examination by their physician at the beginning of each school year and proof that their vaccinations are current.

6th grade students must have proof of DTAP and meningococcal vaccines at the start of the school year. If the student is younger than 11 years old at the start of 6th grade, the student will need proof of the vaccines within two weeks of his/her 11th birthday. Failure to comply can result in the child being excluded from the school. Medical or religious exemptions to immunizations shall be in accordance with the requirements as outlined in N.J.A.C. 8:57-4.3 and 4.4.

A school nurse is present in the building during the regular school day, each day. The nurse provides care for students who are not feeling well, and provides routine screenings including height, weight, scoliosis, hearing and vision. Any issues as a result of the screenings will be communicated to parents.

A student who becomes ill during the school day must obtain a pass from his/her teacher and report to the Main Office to sign the Nurse's Log. The student will be issued a pass to the Nurse's Office. The nurse will call the parents/guardians if the situation warrants immediate attention or if the child has a physical injury. If the child has experienced an injury, the staff member who witnessed the injury will prepare a written report.

Students may not bring medications, either prescription or over-the-counter, to school unless he/she has a medication release form signed by the student's physician and if such form has been provided, any medication brought to school must immediately be given to the nurse (students may not hold onto medicines or self-dose.) No medication will be dispensed without the completed form. Any medication sent to school along with the medication release form must be in its original labeled container and the label must have information that matches the information on the medical release form. The medication must be delivered to the Nurse's Office for safekeeping at the beginning of the school day.

If a student has a life threatening allergy, it is the parent's responsibility to notify the School Nurse, who will develop an Individual Health Plan (IHP) and Individual Emergency Healthcare Plan (IEHP) for the student. Parents will be notified if a student has an allergic reaction and/or if an epi-pen is administered. If an epi-pen is administered, the School nurse will also arrange for transportation to a hospital emergency room, whether the situation has resolved itself or not, so that the student can be checked out by a physician.

Parents are responsible for informing the School Nurse if a student has a diabetic condition, and the nurse will then provide an Individual Health Plan (IHP) and Individual Emergency Healthcare Plan (IEHP) for the student. The School Nurse can administer glucose if a student suffers from a hypoglycemic episode, or parents can give written permission for their student to self-administer.

If the school notifies a parent or guardian that their child is too ill to remain in school, it is expected that the child will be picked up promptly. Students leaving school due to illness must be signed out by a parent or guardian in the Main Office.

8. COUNSELING SERVICES

Link Community Charter School provides for its students the services of two school social workers. Students needing individual, family or group counseling may either request to meet with the social worker or may be referred by a Link faculty/staff or a parent/guardian.

Students who are referred to counseling and social services may be seen once without consent for screening. A parent or legal guardian must give written permission for their child to be seen on a continuous basis. This permission slip allows for the student to be involved in individual, family, and group counseling sessions as needed. If needed, parents/guardians will be asked to comply with counseling services so as not to jeopardize the well-being of their child, as well as their status as a student at Link Community Charter School.

The parents of any students who make statements of serious harm to themselves or others will be contacted immediately, and the parents must take the student for an evaluation by a mental health professional. The student is not allowed back to school until Link receives documentation of psychiatric clearance. Depending on the circumstances, in addition to any disciplinary action deemed appropriate, a condition of re-admittance may be on-going counseling.

The social worker works closely with teachers and parents to ensure the academic and emotional well-being of the student. If necessary, the social worker may create groups with students struggling with similar dilemmas/problems and/or ask a parent/guardian to attend an individual family session. Issues may include self-esteem, grief, anger-management, divorce reaction, abstinence, academic failure, depression, family concerns, gang education, peer conflict, bullying and social skill building. The social worker may also suggest outside counseling and supply further resources for continued therapy.

Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect: New Jersey Law requires that any person who has reasonable cause to believe that a child may have been subjected to abuse or neglect must make a report to the New Jersey Division of Child Protection and Permanency (DCP&P).

9. BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PROGRAM

Because Link values the connection between nutrition and a healthy mind and body, Link provides both a breakfast and a lunch program. All families may apply for the federal reduced or free lunch program. Students who qualify will either receive a price-reduced breakfast and lunch or a free breakfast and lunch. Students will be given information and forms at the beginning of the school year and must submit the forms by the designated deadlines. The State of New Jersey requires all families to complete the form, even if declining the program.

Students who receive free and reduced lunch scan in each day to confirm the receipt of a lunch.

Students who do not qualify for the free or reduced programs may purchase breakfast and/or lunch. Prices will be published at the start of the school year.

Lunch menus and prices will be posted on the school's website.

Students may bring their own lunch from home. The lunch should be nutritious. It is strongly encouraged that students drink water during these meals, for it has been found that water positively impacts brain development. Students may not bring soda or sugary drinks for lunch or breakfast.

If a child forgets a lunch occasionally, the school will make certain he or she has something to eat.

Also please note the school does not have the equipment or adult personnel to refrigerate or warm students' food brought from home.

10. TRANSPORTATION/MONITORING

Link Community Charter School does not provide bus transportation to and from school for students. After registration, the school will notify the Transportation department of each child's sending district that the child is enrolled at Link. Families are strongly encouraged to contact home districts' transportation offices to discuss transportation options for students attending Link.

The Board recognizes that safe and secure conditions for all students transported in school owned or contracted school vehicles is paramount. Students transported in a school owned or contracted school vehicle must maintain proper discipline in the vehicle at all times. To maintain the safe and secure conditions for all students transported on school owned or contracted school vehicles, the Board may use devices to monitor and/or observe student behavior, teacher and support staff behavior, school bus driver discipline procedures and/or school bus driver driving techniques. The device may be a sound video camera, a voice monitoring device or other appropriate devices. The recording may be used in student and staff discipline matters, driver evaluations or for driver discipline or training. For more information please see School Policy 8690.

ADDENDUM A

LINK COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES MANDATED POLICY

7441 ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE IN THE SCHOOL BUILDING AND ON SCHOOL GROUNDS

The Board of Trustees authorizes the use of electronic surveillance systems in the school building and on school grounds to enhance the safety and security for school staff, students, community members, and other building occupants and to protect the school's building and grounds.

The content produced by the surveillance system under certain circumstances may be considered a student record, and if so, it will be subject to the Board of Trustees policy and regulations regarding confidential student records. If the content of the surveillance system becomes the subject of a disciplinary proceeding, it shall be treated like other evidence in the proceeding.

In accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:41-9, if at least one school building of the school district is equipped with video surveillance equipment that is capable of streaming live video wirelessly to a remote location, the Board of Trustees shall enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with local law enforcement authorities providing the authorities with the capacity to activate the equipment and view live streaming video. The MOU shall include the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:41-9 and any additional information required by law enforcement officials. In the event the parties to the MOU are unable to reach an agreement regarding any provision required to be included in the MOU as per N.J.S.A. 18A:41-9a, the County Prosecutor shall make the final determination regarding that provision. Nothing in N.J.S.A. 18A:41-9 shall be construed as to require the installation of video surveillance equipment capable of streaming live video wirelessly to a remote site from a school building that does not have the ability to have live streaming video.

The Board shall post signage in a prominent, public place in the building and on school grounds where electronic surveillance equipment may be used.

In addition to posting, the school shall notify staff members, parent(s) and students that electronic surveillance may be used in the school building and on school grounds through publication in student and staff handbooks, school calendars, notice sent home with students, or any other effective means to publish the school's use of electronic surveillance equipment in the school building and on school grounds.

N.J.S.A. 18A:41-9 Adopted: 11 August 2014

Revised and Re-adopted: 12 March 2018

ADDENDUM B

LINK COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES MANDATED POLICY

8601 STUDENT SUPERVISION AFTER SCHOOL DISMISSAL

The Board of Trustees adopts this Student Supervision After School Dismissal Policy as a result of the New Jersey Supreme Court's decision in *Joseph Jerkins, an infant by his Guardian Ad Litem, Charles Jerkins; Charles Jerkins and Toni Jerkins, individually, v. Soweto Anderson; Kember N. Anderson; John Does 1-10 (fictitious individuals) and ABC Corporations 1-10 (fictitious entities), and Board of Education of Pleasantville Public Schools and Rosemary Clarke.*

The New Jersey Supreme Court, in *Jerkins*, indicated dangers exist for younger students at dismissal as children are susceptible to numerous risks, including negligent conduct, when leaving school property. Because of these risks, the Board of Trustees adopts and requires the implementation of Policy 8601 for the supervision of younger students after dismissal. The supervision provisions of Policy Guide 8601 are applicable to parents or legal guardians of students attending school-operated programs in grade five who are not eligible for school-provided transportation after dismissal or are eligible and elect not to use school-provided transportation after dismissal.

Any parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of a student attending a school-operated school or program in grade five, where the student is not eligible for school-provided transportation or is eligible and elects not to use school-provided transportation after dismissal may request the school or program not release the student to walk home after dismissal unless the student is released to the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) or escort(s) designated by the parent(s) or legal guardian(s). The parent(s) or legal guardian(s) designated escort(s) must be at least eighteen years old. The parent(s) or legal guardian(s) may designate up to three escorts. The parent(s) or legal guardian(s) requesting their child(ren) only be released to a parent(s) or legal guardian(s) or parent(s) or legal guardian(s)-designated escort after dismissal must submit a completed Request for Supervision at Dismissal from School Form to the Principal or designee, or program administrator.

The Form shall be made available to parent(s) or legal guardian(s) in the beginning of the school year in the student registration packet.

Only those parents or legal guardians requesting the school or program not release their child(ren) to walk home after school dismissal unless the child(ren) is released to the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) or designated escort need to complete the Request Form.

In order for the school administration to effectively implement the requirements of this Policy and to ensure the safety and security of students that will be released to a parent(s) or legal guardian(s) or designated escort, the parental request shall be applicable for every school day and shall apply for a duration period of the entire school year. The Request Form must be re-submitted at the end of the duration period. In addition, a parent(s) or legal guardian(s) may rescind their Request by submitting a written request to the Principal or program administrator indicating the date in which the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) no longer requests the school provide supervision of their child(ren) after school dismissal. The child(ren) will be dismissed in accordance with typical dismissal protocol effective the date indicated in the rescinding request.

The Principal or designee, or program administrator upon receiving the Request for Supervision at Dismissal from School Form, shall notify the appropriate school staff member(s) who has supervision of the student at dismissal time at the end of the school day of the parent's or legal guardian's request. The supervising staff member that receives such notice shall retain supervision of the student when other students are dismissed from school at the end of the school day.

The Principal or program administrator will develop and implement a written Student Supervision After School Dismissal Plan for their school building or program location. This Plan shall include the school building's or program's supervision procedures for students at the end of the school day to the designated area in the school building or program and the location of the designated area in the school building or program. The Plan shall be based on the school's or program's ability to provide supervision, the accessibility for the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) or designated escort to pick-up the child without disrupting dismissal of the remaining school population, and other considerations unique to the school building or program location. The school's or program's Student Supervision After School Dismissal Plan shall be provided to all parent(s) or legal guardian(s) that have submitted a Request Form.

In the event the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) or designated escort does not arrive to pick up their child(ren) after the dismissal time of school, the Principal or designee will attempt to contact the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) using the

school's emergency call procedures.

The student(s) shall be supervised by school staff in the designated area of the building and will only be released when the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) or designated escort arrives to pick up the student.

In order to ensure the safety of other students being dismissed from school in accordance with typical school dismissal protocol, to limit interaction of parent(s) or legal guardian(s) or designated escorts with other students within the building, and to avoid traffic and vehicular safety problems outside the school building, the Principal or program administrator may prohibit the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) or designated escort from entering the school building until a time period after school has dismissed or until school buses and other vehicular traffic have cleared the school site. This determination shall be made by the Principal or program administrator after considering the unique circumstances at the school building and the building's typical dismissal protocol.

In the event of an emergency such that, when an unforeseen event prevents a parent or legal guardian or designated escort from arriving for the child(ren) at dismissal within fifteen minutes after the dismissal time, the student will remain in the school supervised by school staff until the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) or designated escort arrives and signs the student out of school. If the parent or designated escort does not come to the school within one hour of dismissal, the Newark Police Department will be contacted to transport the child to the Police Station where the child will be held until the parent or designated escort will pick up the child.

The school will provide parent(s) or legal guardian(s) information regarding any supervised after-school services, if any, that may be available to students at the school's facilities after formal school dismissal.

This Policy shall be published in student/school handbooks. In addition, the school shall provide to parent(s) or legal guardian(s) in the beginning of the school year, the school's calendar to include the starting and dismissal times for full session, half-session, and early dismissal days due to weather or other emergencies. Parent(s) or legal guardian(s) shall be required to return to the school a signed acknowledgement of receipt of the student/school handbook, which shall include this Policy and the school calendar. In addition, any changes to the school's calendar made during the school year shall also be provided to parent(s) or legal guardian(s).

Adopted: 11 August 2014

