



November 13, 2020

Dear Link families,

As we close out our isolation period for those students and staff that come into the school building and continue to deep clean the rooms and common areas being used, we continue to be concerned about the rising COVID numbers in our region. Of particular concern is Newark's current pandemic experience as we see rising positivity rates far exceeding our statewide average, growing hospitalizations, and an increasing death toll—all indications that we are heading into a very difficult winter.

Link has been in a unique position. As a small and independent public charter school with 50 years of experience, we have been able to marshal resources and pivot our programming to support a hybrid educational program, prioritizing families with essential workers and students with special needs. The combination of (1) strong protocols and PPE and (2) low COVID-19 coronavirus rates in the community, allowed Link to implement a hybrid program. While the school's response since September 8<sup>th</sup> has been very strong, the environment outside of school is changing rapidly. Despite Link NOT experiencing an in-school transmission in the 10 weeks we have been in session, we believe the situation in the community is at a juncture that we must reconsider our hybrid program.

We know that some of our families need the support of the hybrid program and we know that transitioning to all remote will place some additional burden on them. **But, in light of the current Newark experience, Link will continue with ALL remote through January 22, 2021.** This decision was not made lightly, but it is made with the health and safety of our entire school community, and that of the greater Newark community, in mind. Our scholars all have the technology they need to continue with remote learning. Our staff has been providing strong support since September 8<sup>th</sup> and will continue to do so as we remain committed to providing the best program we can for our Link scholars.

Some important information as we transition to ALL remote:

- The main office is still accessible from 8 am to 4 pm, Monday through Friday, via email and phone to Ms. Brooks, our school secretary ([mbrooks@linkschool.org](mailto:mbrooks@linkschool.org), 973-642-0529).
- Our technology team is available to troubleshoot via [linktech@linkschool.org](mailto:linktech@linkschool.org), 973-817-0462.
- Breakfast and lunch meals will continue to be available on Mondays, 8 am to 4 pm, and Tuesdays, from 12 to 6 pm. You can pick up 5 breakfast and 5 lunch meals per week for each school aged child in the household.

We thank you for your ongoing support and collaboration. It is when home and school work together that we are most successful. This year calls on us to that more than ever and we are grateful for our partnership!

Sincerely,

Maria Pilar Paradiso  
Head of School

Kathleen M. Hester, Ed.S.  
Principal