



2017-2018 PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK

Building a Community on Core Values

**Respect
Responsibility
Honesty
Caring
Doing One's Best
Following Directions**

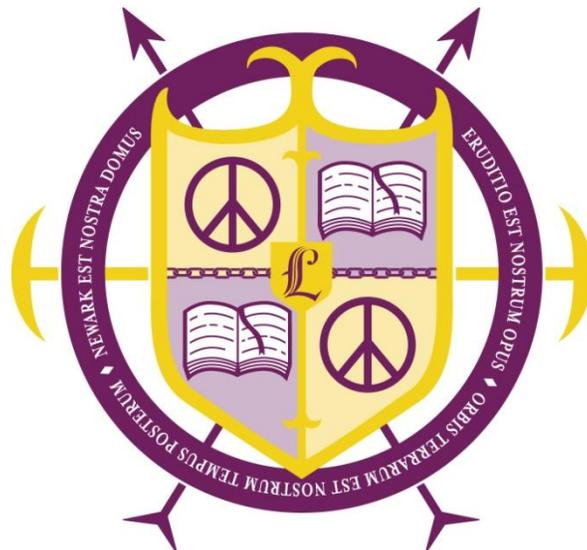


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SCHOOL INFORMATION

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 support 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
- HONESTY
- CARING
- DOING ONE'S BEST
- FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS

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. A 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 Department of Education 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 over the and plan to make even more enhancements to the space to accommodate the larger number of students and to support the rich, comprehensive curriculum at Link.

Finally in September 2015, the school welcomed four full grades - 5th through 8th, with a total of 288 students. Given the increased enrollment spanning four grades, the school is divided into an Upper House (grades 7 & 8) and a Lower House (grades 5 & 6).

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;
- 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;
- 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;
- 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;
- 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 and the New Jersey Charter School Association. Link Community Charter School is also a signatory to the Compact for Newark Charter Schools and thus 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 regulation 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 NJ 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.ilinkschool.org).

2. NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Link Community Charter School values diversity and does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national and ethnic origin, disability or socio-economic status in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, school activities, extra-curricular programming and other school-administered programs.

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 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

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, speak with prospective parents at Open House, sell 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, generally the first Thursday of each month, 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 phone calls and emails are handled promptly; and
- Communicate information about the school on a regular basis via publications in the Parent Communications 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 children;
- 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 children's grade books on PowerSchool on a regular basis and read through all reports coming home, such as the *DeansList*, progress reports, report cards, etc.;
- Read all publications coming from the school and respond accordingly (complete permission slips, sign forms, etc.) ;
- Sign your child's homework (all grades) and daily reading log (Lower House);
- Ensure that their children return the Parent Communications envelope (plastic purple envelope) 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 our 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 without permission from the office staff.

Visitors are required to sign in at the Main Office 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:

- 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".
- Students will enter the building as follows:
 - Upper House (7th and 8th grades): through the lower level door closest to Thomas Street/the park)
 - Lower House (5th and 8th 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.

- Students should arrive to school 15 minutes before the school start time so they can settle in nicely before the day begins. Please plan with your 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 4:00 pm. (On Early Dismissal Days, 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 pm, 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 you are running late for pick up, please call the school with an estimate of the time you will arrive, so we can explain to your child and hold him/her until you arrive. You will have to enter the school and sign your 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 you have not picked your child up by 6 pm, you will be called and told from which police precinct to pick up your child.
- If crossing a street students and their parents must use the crosswalks for safety reasons.

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 *SchoolMessenger*, 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.

STUDENT LIFE: ACADEMICS

1. ACADEMIC HONOR CODE

It must be understood that all students who attend Link Community Charter School automatically pledge that all school work - 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 as follows, except where noted on the school calendar:

Lower House 7:45 am - 4:00 pm

Upper House 8:00 am - 4:00 pm

On select Fridays each month, students will have early dismissal days (12:45 pm), to allow for staff professional development and meetings. The dates and times will be noted on the school calendar 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 the NJ state standards and the New Jersey Student Learning Standards and prepares students for competitive high schools. The program is rigorous, but also meets students where they are thus ensuring steady growth and development.

Upper School (Grades 7 and 8)

Core subjects are generally taught one period each day of the week, with the exception of physical education (one period on two days per week) and health (one period per week). The core subjects include:

- Social Studies
- English Language Arts (ELA)
- Science
- Math
- Physical Education
- Health

Co-curricular subjects are taught in different frequencies during the week as follows:

- Fine Arts (four periods each week for one academic quarter)
- Music (four periods each week for one academic quarter)
- Performing Arts (four periods each week for one academic quarter)
- Creative Writing (four periods each week for one academic quarter)
- 21st Century Research Skills (two periods each week for two quarters)
- High School Placement (two periods each week for two quarters)
- Elective Period (one period each week with change in course each quarter).

Lower School (Grades 5 and 6)

Core subjects are generally taught one period each day of the week, with the exception of physical education (one period on two days each week) and health (four periods per week for one quarter). The core subjects include:

- Math
- English Language Arts
- Social Studies (five days per week for two quarters)
- Science (five days per week for two quarters)

- Physical Education
- Health

Co-curricular subjects are taught in different frequencies during the week as follows:

- Fine Arts (four periods each week for one academic quarter)
- Music (four periods each week for one academic quarter)
- Performing Arts (four periods each week for one academic quarter)
- Life Skills (one period each week for one academic quarter)
- 21st Century Research Skills (two periods each week for the year)

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 co-curricular subjects, except High School Placement in the Upper House.

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

- 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	Prepared for class
Accepts responsibility	Cares for peers
Does one's best	Follows directions
Follows school rules	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 and on time). If students do not complete an assignment, teachers may apply the following policy:

# of Days Late	Missing Assignment #1	Missing Assignment # 2	Missing Assignment # 3
1	10% reduction in grade and verbal warning	10% reduction in grade and call to parent	10% reduction in grade and referral to the Dean of Students
2	20% reduction in grade Call home	20% reduction in grade	20% reduction in grade
3	Automatic zero Call home	Automatic zero Call home	Automatic zero Call home

Every quarter, the number of missing assignments will reset to zero.

If a student has a one day excused absence, the policy will begin upon return to class.

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.

6. STANDARDIZED TESTING

Link Community Charter School will adhere to state guidelines regarding standardized testing. All students will sit for the PARCC Tests and 8th grade students will sit for the NJASK Science Test.

In addition, the NWEA MAP Test will be administered to students at two or three well-spaced intervals during the year, and students will be assessed for reading levels throughout the school year.

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

Fourth quarter report cards are mailed home by the end of June.

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 Honors

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

- 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 is:

- 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 and core value honors at the end of each quarter and at the end of the year.

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 18 or more 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 are included in this Parent-Student Handbook, can be found in the Link Community Charter School Board of Trustees Policy and Regulations Manual. This information will 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/History, including civics, government, world geography; and United States History
 - 4 years of Physical Education and Health
 - 4 years of Art, Music and Performing Arts; 2 years of Creative Writing
 - 4 years of Technology
 - 4 years of Advisory
 - 2 years of High School Placement
- or
- An Individualized Educational Plan (Special Education), Individual Language Plan (English Language Learner Program), or a general education 504 Plan.

*For students who enter the school after the 5th grade, the requirements are appropriately adjusted.

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 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. 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 these terms at the start of the school year. Honesty is a Core Value at Link, and cheating, forgery and plagiarism are direct violations of the value of Honesty.

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. Honesty is a Core Value at Link, and cheating is a direct violation of it. This cheating also includes signing someone else's name on documents.

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. Works found on the Internet or other sources is prohibited as 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. Plagiarizing is a violation of Link's Core Value of Honesty.

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. Essentially, students are required to come to class prepared, to participate fully and be attentive and focused, to be respectful and 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. Homework is typically assigned as follows:

Day of the Week	Upper House	Lower House
Monday	Math and Science	Math and Science
Tuesday	History and ELA	ELA and Math
Wednesday	Math and Science	ELA and Math
Thursday	History and ELA	ELA and Math

It is also expected that students read a minimum of 30 minutes each day. Lower House students must have parents sign their daily reading logs every evening.

Students use the homework folder for all assignments and are expected to have assignments reviewed and signed by a parent. 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. Completed assignments are handed in as students enter the building in the yellow homework folder. Students who do not have completed homework at the check in site or who do not have a signature will receive a consequence.

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 the consequences as shown in the chart on page 13.

STUDENT LIFE: REGULATIONS

1. ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance for each child is essential to their success in school. A record of attendance is kept and is becomes part of the student's permanent record. Attendance will appear on the student report card/transcript.

It is expected that students are at school every day. An accumulation of 18 or more absences in a school year may be cause for retention in 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, doctors' visits and personal appointments so students do not miss any school. Students should not miss any 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.

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 or unexcused 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 he/she returns to school. The note must include the diagnosis and length of time for recuperation, as well as any restrictions caused by the illness. This must be turned in to the Main Office staff immediately upon return to school.

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.

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 one day after returning to school to make up the missed work if he/she misses a day or two of school. 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. If a parent knows a child will be out for three days or more, the parent may request the school to collect the student's work for completion at home if the child is able.

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 18 or more 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. Student latenesses are indicated on the student's report card/transcript. The lateness of any member of our school community impacts our ability to be at our best. Students take responsibility for lateness by apologizing to the school community during Morning Circle if they are late to school.

Any student who is not present at 8:00 am (Upper House) or 7:45 am (Lower House) is considered late. There are no exceptions.

Students arriving late 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 homework folder and purple envelope at this time.) The pass will indicate the time of arrival.

Chronic lateness may be subject to disciplinary action.

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 and O'Hara Uniforms**. Their contact information is:

Flynn and O'Hara Uniforms
196-198 Ferry Street, Newark
www.flynnohara.com
Toll Free 800.441.4122

The physical education uniform (worn to school two days per week when students take physical education) will be purchased directly from Link and is stocked 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, such parent needs to call/send a note to the Dean of Students to explain why. Students are required to apologize to the school community during Morning Circle when they are out of uniform without permission.

Regular Uniform

Girls:

Gray and burgundy striped skirt (no shorter than one inch above the knee) or gray slacks
Gray walking shorts (in warm weather)
Gray polo with the Link logo, long or short sleeved
Solid black socks or tights
Solid black shoes or sneakers (ALL BLACK), no boots or sandals
Gray cardigan with the Link logo or Link sweatshirt
Plain black belt (to be worn with slacks)

Boys

Gray slacks
Gray walking shorts (in warm weather)
White short or long sleeved shirt with buttoned down collar (not the Link polo shirt)
Solid black socks
Solid black shoes or sneakers (ALL BLACK), no boots or sandals
Plain black belt
Gray cardigan with the Link logo or Link sweatshirt

Physical Education Uniform for Girls and Boys (to be worn on P.E. days only)

Burgundy sweatpants or mesh shorts with the Link logo
Gray tee shirt with the Link logo
Burgundy crew neck or hooded sweatshirt with the Link logo
Solid black sneakers
Solid black socks

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 or sneakers.

Students **may not wear cargo style pants or shorts nor extremely oversized pants or shorts**. Pants and shorts must be worn above the hips – no sagging.

Students **may not wear colored T-shirts or T-shirts with printing on them** under their uniform clothing. They may not wear long sleeved garments under any short sleeved shirt (dress, polo or tee shirt).

Students must wear solid black sneakers, on gym days. It is recommended that these sneakers not be expensive brand names.

Students must wear sneakers to participate in sports at recess. Students will not be able to change their shoes for recess.

Jewelry:

- Students may wear plain stud earrings and a plain watch. They may not wear other jewelry including necklaces and bracelets.
- Students may wear religious medals but they must be worn UNDER the blouse or shirt.
- 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 in the Main Office.

Students **may not wear make-up** of any sort, including lipstick or lip gloss. Students will be sent to the Main Office to remove makeup and may be subject to disciplinary action. (Lip balm such as Chapstick or Blistek is allowed if needed.)

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. Girls may wear simple solid colored headbands or scrunchies (to hold hair back) - in black, burgundy, white or gray ONLY. They may not wear headbands or other hair ornaments such as flowers, bows, sequins, or other adornments.

Students may not carry purses. Personal items should be kept in a small bag inside the student's backpack.

If a child needs to wear a garment or jewelry for religious reasons, parents need to inform and discuss this with the Dean of Students or the Principal.

Students must 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 exclude a student from certain activities, including field trips, if a student does not come to school in the appropriate attire.

Out of Uniform Days

On occasion students are permitted 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.

No apparel may be worn that administrators judge to be too revealing and that distracts from the educational environment, including ripped, torn or tight jeans, sagging pants, and cropped shirts/tops. Furthermore, any clothing that denotes gang affiliations or is inappropriate for a school setting is prohibited.

Out of uniform days are not at the discretion of students, but will be announced by a school administrator.

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
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 Community. 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 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 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 within 20 minutes of closing time 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. 9.)

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, bodegas, etc.

Students are not allowed to leave the school building (e.g. to go to a store or to purchase ice cream from the street vendor), except when they are being picked up by a parents at dismissal.

Students are strongly encouraged to go immediately home, and should not stop at stores or restaurants before doing so.

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 level 0 (see voice level chart on page 22) 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 our 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.

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 cubby (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 may bring a lock to secure their locker, but the lockers are the property of the school and are subject to search.

14. HALL PASSES

Whenever a student is outside the classroom, 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 Community Charter School 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.

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 brought 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.

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

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. 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.

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. (see #26 Threats)

Hitting and slapping, as well as “play fighting,” 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.

19. CUTTING CLASS

Any student who skips a class of any type, including community or 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 make a collection of money or materials for their own purpose or for an organization to which they belong in or outside of school 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 welcome 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, and will not replace them.

23. 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, generally, may not make calls to anyone other than his/her parent or guardian.

24. WEAPONS

Weapons of any kind are not permitted at Link Community Charter School. 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 discipline rubric and the student will be subject to expulsion.

25. 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.

26. THREATS, HARASSMENT & 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) for any reason whatsoever. 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.

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 and process/form for reporting an alleged incident can be found on the school’s website. The consequences and remedial measures for acts of harassment, intimidation and bullying can be found in the Discipline Rubric on page 31.

27. 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 are expected to follow their directions and use the Core Values in all interactions with them.

28. 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 should never 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.

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

29. 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, 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 any inspect student lockers, desks, and other storage facilities at any time, without permission.

30. 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.

Goals of the Discipline System

1. Motivate students to perform well;
2. Build a strong sense of community;
3. Hold students accountable for their actions by keeping the Core Values in mind; and
4. 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, tone or language, he or she will be given a verbal warning, 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 timeout” where he/she will reflect silently on the behavior and complete the “Return to Class Form”, as well as meet with the teacher to discuss the incident and strategies that can prevent continued similar behavior. The completed form will be returned to the teacher who will then give it to the dean of students. The 5 minute timeout for self-reflection may occur outside the classroom or in a section of the classroom where the student can do so quietly while the remainder of the class proceeds with the lesson.

Step 3: If the behavior continues or is serious, the student will be asked to go to the dean of student’s office, taking along the Return to Class form. The dean of students will determine the appropriate consequences in consultation with the teacher and the Discipline Rubric. A Mandatory Student Conference maybe held as a follow up.

During the Mandatory Student Conference, the student meets with the teacher and dean of students 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, dean of students, the teacher involved and other staff members may be asked to be present for this meeting with the parents.

(The remainder of this page has been left intentionally blank. Proceed to page 31.)

4. DISCIPLINE RUBRIC

CATEGORY 1	First Violation	Second Violation	Third Violation	Fourth Violation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lateness to school • Public display of affection • Inappropriate language • Voice Volume Violation • Minor Misconduct 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal warning and inform student to change behavior • Call home when appropriate • Issue demerits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue demerits • Student Reflection • Recess Detention • Call home when appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue demerits • Administrative Detention • Call home • Restorative Justice Conference/ Parent Conference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friday or Saturday Detention • In-School/Out-of-School Suspension when appropriate • Restorative Justice Conference/ • Parent Conference
CATEGORY 2	First Violation	Second Violation	Third Violation	Fourth Violation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dress Code violation • Disrupting the educational process (level 1) • Cheating/Plagiarism • Dishonesty • Electronic device/technology violation • Forgery • Insubordinate/disrespect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue demerits • Administrative Detention • Student Reflection • Call home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue demerits • Friday or Saturday Detention • Call home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call home • In-School Suspension • Restorative Justice Conference/ Parent Conference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call home • Out-of-School Suspension • Restorative Justice Conference /Parent Conference
CATEGORY 3	First Violation	Second Violation	Third Violation	Fourth Violation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disrupting the educational process (level 2) • Physical fighting • Hitting, slapping, kicking... • Bullying • Threats/harassment • Theft/Vandalism • Cutting class • Skipping detention/ conference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue demerits • 1-5 day Out-of-School Suspension • Restorative Justice Conference/ Parent Conference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue demerits • 3-10 day Out-of-School Suspension • Restorative Justice Conference/ Parent Conference • Meeting with Social Worker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5-10 day Out-of-School Suspension • Restorative Justice Conference / Parent Conference • Meeting with Social Worker • Conference with School Police Officer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 day Out-of-School Suspension • Restorative Justice Conference /Parent Conference • Meeting with Social Worker • Conference with School Police Officer
CATEGORY 4	First Violation	Second Violation	Third Violation	Fourth Violation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weapons • Terrorist threats • Drugs/Alcohol (Use and/or Possession) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Automatic 10 day Out-of-School Suspension • Restorative Justice Conference /Parent Conference • Police informed 			

5. MONITORING STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Link will utilize *DeansList* (software) to monitor student behavior and communicate such with students and parents. The program is designed to teach students self-discipline by being aware that in life there are rewards and consequences for their actions. It 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. The program will work 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 70 or above. If a student's conduct causes his/her point balance to fall below 70, he or she will serve a week of consequences beginning the Monday after the report is released.
- Additionally, a student must average a point balance of 75 for the year in order to be able to participate in end-of-year activities.
- Each Friday, students will receive the *DeansList* Report during Advisory and will put it in their Parent Communications Envelope to take home to their parents. Parents are required sign the Parent Communications Form located in the Parent Communications Envelope that they received the Report.

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, improves
- *Following Directions*: keeps order encouraging others to follow school rules, listens and responds appropriately

Week of Consequences

If a student's conduct causes his/her *DeansList* points to fall below 70 points in a given week, the student could face consequences including but not limited to:

- No recess or computer lab privileges
- Mandatory Detention, possibly Friday or Saturday detention
- No extracurricular activities, sports, trips or special performance

Monthly Celebrations

Students with more than 100 points may be offered special events, special trips, parties, dress down passes and other rewards as determined by the dean of students.

6. DETENTION

Administrative Detention

It is important that our students know that they are expected to live the Core Values as 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
- Ongoing discipline issues (regularly failing to meet expectations) as reflected in *DeansList* points falling below 70 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.

Recess Detention

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 Folder will receive a recess detention on the day of the infraction. 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.

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. 18A: 37-2, and approved by the commissioner as part of the school's charter. The Dean of Students may recommend suspension to the Principal. The Head of School, after staff consultation, may 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, **including school buses**.

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

- Continued and willful disobedience
- Open defiance of the authority of any teacher or person having authority over him
- Habitual use of profanity or of obscene language
- Conduct of such character as to constitute a continuing danger to the physical well-being of other pupils
- Physical assault upon another pupil or an adult
- Taking, or attempting to take, personal property or money from another pupil or an adult, or from his presence, by means of force or fear
- Willfully causing, or attempting to cause, substantial damage to school property
- Participation in an unauthorized occupancy by any group of pupils or others of any part of

the school, and failure to leave the school promptly after having been directed to do so by the person(s) in charge of the facility

- Incitement which is intended to and does result in unauthorized occupation by any group of pupils or others in the school
- Incitement which is intended to and does result in truancy by other pupils
- Knowing possession or knowing consumption 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

Assault by a student on a teacher, administrator, board member or other employee acting in the performance of his/her duties will result in immediate suspension from school. Due process proceedings will follow pursuant to 18A: 37-2.1. Pursuant to 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 suspension 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 for student expulsion. The Board has the final authority for expulsion decisions.

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 those 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. 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 charter school 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 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 district board of education 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 or cumulative school days. In reaching decisions for removal, the head of school will consider such factors 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 is committed to provide services that enable all disabled children to progress appropriately in the general education curriculum and advance appropriately toward achieving the goals set out in the student's IEP. This commitment applies to all disabled children who:

- Are removed from current placement for more than 10 cumulative or consecutive school days in the school year
- Experience a series of short-term removals not deemed a change of placement
- Exhibit behaviors that are not manifestations of the student's disability and result in removals that do constitute a change of placement.

In the case of a removal for drug or weapons offenses under 34 C.F.R. §300.520(a)(2), or a removal by an administrative law judge for dangerousness consistent with 34 C.F.R. §300.521, the charter school board will provide services to the student with a disability consistent with 34 C.F.R. §300.522.

10. CONSEQUENCES AND REMEDIATION MEASURES FOR ACTS OF HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION OR BULLYING

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 his/her 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 4:15 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
- Parent notification consistent with the policies and procedures establish pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-6.2(b)3
- Protections as provided by the state law. (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 our 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 class one day each week for the entire school year.

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, and meeting of all application and scholarship deadlines.

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.

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.

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).

Lower House athletics may include Girls on the Run, a personal development and running program, and Link Golf Academy, a First Tee program. 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.

Participation in after school clubs, if offered, requires good academic and behavioral standing. These may take place during the elective period or afterschool. Some clubs offered in the recent have been Student Government Association and the science club.

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, for over 40 years. 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 programs are mandatory for all students as 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.

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 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 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

NJ 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 only at age 10 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.

A school nurse is present in the building during the regular school day, each day. The nurse ministers to students who are not feeling well, but also 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 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/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 in the emergency room of a local hospital. 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 cannot 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 food.

10. TRANSPORTATION

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 the 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.