

ANNUAL REPORT 2007-2008

LINK

COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Newark is our home. Education is our work. The World is our future.

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CO-CHAIRS



Dear friends,

The 2007-08 school year may have been the most robust in the school's history. Student performance, culminating in perhaps our best high school admissions cycle ever, continues on a path of raising the bar of excellence. Link has always been a place where students drive the development of the institution. In the past year we've taken hard looks into the future and responded with a framework that we hope will serve the next generation and beyond. Our Strategic Plan, most recently updated in 2006, continues to be a living document that provides a series of developmental snapshots. The one thing that hasn't changed year over year: it's all about the students.

Extraordinary achievement doesn't just happen; at Link it continues to be a shared vision. If you are involved with Link, you buy in to the values and belief in education that the Sisters of St. Dominic set forth. We can't say enough about the role of our administrators and teachers in facilitating and promoting Link's culture. Their leadership, the example they set, the encouragement they provide, the demands they make...quite simply, "yes I can" is something our students believe in.

The Board navigated several complex issues during the year, not the least of which was an assessment of the feasibility study for a capital campaign and the process of evaluating alternative physical sites to accommodate our growth and student needs. We appreciate the input of so many of you who participated in the study; we learned a lot. Most of all, we learned how many people love our mission and our students. If only the economy shared that sentiment! We put our campaign plans on hold in light of current circumstances. But when they change we will be working from a strong foundation.

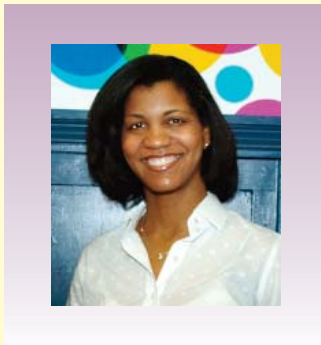
The beauty of Link is in its character as a mosaic. When Marnie reports to the Board, we hear of a student who won honorable mention for Princeton University's Dr. Martin Luther King essay contest. We hear of students being instructed in table etiquette, partly to prepare for hosting The Young Presidents Organization. We listen to a report from four of our students who went to London over spring break. These opportunities are made possible by people who care about Link and our students. We believe that it is these pieces that make Link what it is.

We are ending our terms as Chairs and turning things over to Wendy Lacey. We've worked closely together on the transition and couldn't be more confident in Wendy's abilities. Link, and the investment of your time, talent and treasure is in good hands. In closing, we add a personal thanks to all of you who have worked with us and helped us with Link. Keep raising the bar!

Sincerely,

Ed Sheridan and Chris Garavente

MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL



Dear friends,

We are pleased to report that Link's 2007-2008 school year was a remarkable one, and the entire Link community joins in extending a heartfelt thank you for your incredible support during this school year. You have been instrumental in helping us raise the necessary funds needed to provide an innovative middle school education that paves the way for a great high school, college opportunity, and life-long success for our students.

Link's goal is to provide its students with the best quality middle school education available in the country despite their socio-economic status. Ultimately, our goal is to continue to increase our students' academic preparedness for high school, by tailoring our program more effectively to meet the needs of students of varied academic abilities. We know that the success of our students and school as a whole depends very much on our teachers, parents and students and how we support them. And that support is a derivative of the support you give us.

This Annual Report is a celebration of what many minds can do when they support one mission. You will see the great investment you have made in a Link education and in the lives of our students. Our hope is that you not only see your generosity reflected on these pages but that our world will benefit from your gift for many, many generations.

With Gratitude,

Marnie G. McKoy

OUR FOUNDATION

Our Mission

Link Community School seeks to provide an outstanding independent middle school education for Newark adolescents of all academic abilities from economically disadvantaged families. Link endeavors to create a powerful learning community built on a collective commitment to excellence and enduring core values. By building a strong academic foundation and instilling life long values, Link aims to develop students who will be successful in higher education and responsible and resourceful citizens who give back to others.

Our Vision

Educational Excellence: To provide students of all ability levels an exceptional education on par with the best middle school education offered anywhere in the country. A Link education will provide students the academic foundation and character development necessary to be successful learners and members of their future communities.

High School Placement: To place students in top high schools in the region and country and to insure that they have the skills to succeed in those programs.

Inspiring Other Schools: To be recognized as a model urban middle school for our student success and innovative educational practices. Link aims to inspire and support the development of other highly effective schools that provide similar success for thousands of under-served students.



Our History

Link, a non-denominational middle school, was founded in 1969 by the Sisters of St. Dominic of Caldwell, NJ in response to the 1967 Newark riots that left much of the Central Ward in poverty. The Sisters desired that Link be a force for restoration in the devastated city by providing educational excellence for its youth. Today, the need for high caliber education for Newark's children is as great as ever.

Our Core Values

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

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Our School

7th and 8th grades

Enrollment of 120



Our Students

57% Female

43% Male

98% Black

2% Hispanic

80% are Newark residents

20% are residents from the surrounding areas, including East Orange, Irvington, Orange and Union.

66% are from low income families (according to the federal free and reduced lunch program)

70% live in single parent households

100% receive tuition assistance (families pay about 9% of the cost of education)

Our Program

Student/faculty ratio

7:1

Average class size

16

Core courses

English, history, mathematics, science

Co-curricular courses

Spanish, fine art, computers, theater arts, high school prep, music, physical education, health, and reading/writing lab

Electives courses

These change quarterly and this year included karate, film criticism, French, musical instrument lessons, Japanese, law, and more.

Our Facility

One building with 12 classrooms

Computer, music and science labs

SmartBoards in every core subject classroom and the computer lab

Mini-labs with 3-4 computers in several classrooms

HIGHLIGHTS from 2007-2008

Impressive student results

Standardized Test Scores: As measured by the CTB Terra Nova Standardized Test, the cumulative scores of the graduating class of 2008 increased by 5.4 grade levels overall versus an expected 1.8 and the scores for rising 7th graders show growth of 3.8 grade levels overall versus an expected level of 0.8.

High School Acceptances: All students (100%) in the 2008 graduating class received acceptance to at least one quality private or magnet high school of their choice. Additionally, 90% or more of the class were accepted to 2 or more schools.

Honors: Link's graduating class included one Wight Foundation and 3 NJ SEEDS scholars.

High School Scholarships: The graduating class earned over \$1.7 million in scholarships, financial aid or grants to some of the best high schools in the country.

Link Alumni: Link was able to contact 46 of 62 alumni from the Class of 2004. Of those reached, 96% (44) graduated high school this year. The other 4% (2) planned to graduate the following year. Of the 96% who graduated high school, 86% stated they would attend college in the fall.



Significant academic program enhancements

Began a review of curriculum for changes for the 2008-2009 school year.

Hired a special education teacher to assist students of all abilities, particularly the struggling learners.

Introduced a public speaking class with instruction in speech, articulation and diction, to help students gain skill and confidence.

Implemented a literature enrichment and an advanced writing course.

Added more remedial support and after school tutoring.



"Link is the type of school that will prepare you for high school, college, and life itself. Link is full of love, caring and discipline." Kyla Salters '08

HIGHLIGHTS from 2007-2008, cont'd



Instituted a Student Leadership Academy, which included sessions in public speaking, planning, facilitating a meeting, problem solving and leadership styles plus a week-long bonding experience at Princeton-Blairstown Center, all to help students prepare for their leadership roles at Link.

Completed a four-week summer program which resulted in significant increases in reading and writing as evidenced by pre- and post-assessments.

Established co-curricular classes to include students of all ability levels rather than grouping them by level to remove the stigma of being in a lower level class and provide the good influences of the upper level students.



Partnered with the New Jersey Performing Arts Theater Arts Residency Program to expose students to the theater arts, including acting and improvisation.

Offered new elective classes to students through partnerships. NJ LEEP provided classes for 8th graders in the basics of constitutional law and criminal law; businessman Tarik Rogers ran a class called BizWorld which focused on how businesses operate; and Dr. Robert Ellis conducted a class in Japanese language and culture.

Notable institutional advancements

Raised over \$2 million through the generosity of many donors to provide an outstanding academic program, an excellent staff and on-going maintenance of the facility.

Continued to plan for a major fundraising initiative with the goal of providing funds for endowment and capital improvements to secure the future of the school.

Began the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools Re-Accreditation process.



"I had help from certain people who helped me open up. I had teachers who cared about me and expected me to do my best and I did...Link taught me how to live life and how to take challenges and keep trying to overcome them." Danielle Bouie '08

HIGHLIGHTS from 2007-2008, cont'd

Launched a ten year study of the Class of 2009, tracking and assessing the students' progress and achievements after Link.

Provided many professional development opportunities for staff focused on differentiated instruction and technology.

Continued to provide workshops for parents: gang awareness, talking with their child about sex and navigating the transition to high school.

Created the position of Director of Communications to provide a more consistent and effective public relations program for Link.

Developed new partnerships that yielded opportunities for students to grow and develop academically and personally. Trustees Margo Walter and Stacy Feinstein began a new girls' mentoring group; the Landsberger Family hosted four female students in London for a week; the Young Presidents Organization led by Link friend Bill Feinstein hosted a formal luncheon and program for students; Goldman Sachs Community Team Works assisted 8th graders with a service project cleaning the bank of the Passaic River in Newark over four days; and Appel Farm Summer Arts Camp in Elmer, NJ provided several scholarships for Link students to attend their camp in the summer of 2007.

Provided new programs and events for alumni, including an ice cream social and a canoe trip on the Delaware with Project U.S.E., to help maintain a connection with them.

Held a Celebration of Fathers event for students and the male influences in their lives – fathers, uncles or grandfathers.

Made the following capital improvements: new doors to administrators' offices, 20 new Dell computers for the Computer Lab, and new air conditioners for two classrooms.



"Link has become a huge part of my life and the principles and knowledge I have picked up while here have filled a hole in my heart... The administrators taught me hope and the students taught me courage. I will never forget all that Link has blessed me with. I am forever grateful and they know that somehow, someday I will repay them." ~ Paul Wells '08

HIGHLIGHTS from 2007-2008, cont'd

Special student accomplishments

8th grader Justen Haynes received an honorable mention for an essay he wrote for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Celebration at Princeton University in February.

One team of four 8th grade girls in the Sally Ride Science Club, Sadiera Crawford, Shaheerah Allen, Amber Rogers and Joyceline Appiah, were invited to compete in the finals of the organization's Toy Challenge Competition in Arlington, VA in May.

7th Graders Dianna Fulton and Crystal Ngoje were awarded first and second place in the 7th/8th grade category at the annual UMDNJ Science Fair. Imani Powell, William Joyce, Victor Araromi and Evelyn Ale received honorable mention.

The African Dance group, trained and directed by Jerome Hunter, was invited to perform at Diversity Day at Seton Hall Law School in Newark.

The Link Boys' Basketball team placed second among school teams in the Charter School Athletic League.



"We have begun to end the long hard journey Link has revealed... We must continue to follow what we have learned and maybe one day we will be the ones creating a school like Link."
 ~ Oluwa Shoyoye '08

OUR PARTNERS

Link appreciates the many partners which have provided new experiences and exposures to Link students...opportunities which have greatly enriched and enhanced their educational and personal development.

Extracurricular Programs

Football Clinic for Boys and Tennis Clinic for Girls with Athletes in Action, Inc., NY Giants football team, and Mr. Douglas Golding, tennis professional

NJPAC Artist-in-Residency Program

Novartis Community Partnership Day

Novartis "Take Your Children to Work Day"

Playwrights Theatre's The New Jersey
Writer's Project



Mentoring Programs

Wednesday Girls' Group, with
Ms. Margo Walter and
Ms. Stacy Feinstein

Thursday Girls' Group, with
Ms. Gloria McDonald and
Ms. Vernay Simmons

Friday Boys' Group, with
Mr. Ed Reitz, Mr. Gene Crocker,
Mr. Cedric Ashley and
Mr. Robert Ellis

OUR PARTNERS, continued



Summer Camps and Programs

Appel Farms Summer Arts Camp

Camp Agawam

Camp Border Collie

The Island School

NJ LEEP Summer Law Institute

Playwrights of NJ Summer Theater Camp

Project U.S.E. Dakota Trip

The SMART Program at UMDNJ

After School and Saturday Programs

Fencing at The Peter Westbrook Foundation,
courtesy of Mr. and Mrs .Ed Reitz

Ice Hockey, courtesy of NJ Goals Ahead

Jr. Golf Academy, courtesy of Athletes in Action, Inc.,
PlaySmart, Inc. and Chelsea Piers Foundation

Boatbuilding Program, courtesy of Project U.S.E.

Sally Ride Science Club, courtesy of Novartis



OUR 2008 GRADUATES

Link celebrates the achievements of the Class of 2008. Each graduate was accepted into at least one, and in many cases more, of the following outstanding private schools and/or Newark magnet schools:

Arts High School
 Benedictine Academy
 Berkshire School
 Christ the King High School
 Delbarton School
 Don Bosco High School
 Episcopal Academy
 Gill St. Bernard's School
 Immaculate Conception High School
 Lawrenceville School
 Marist High School

Marylawn of the Oranges Academy
 Morristown Beard School
 Mother Seton High School
 Newark Collegiate Academy
 Oratory Prep
 Phillips Exeter Academy
 Pingry School
 Roselle Catholic High School
 Seton Hall Prep
 St. Anthony High School
 St. Benedict's Prep

St. James Prep
 St. Patrick High School
 St. Peter's Prep
 St. Vincent Academy
 Science Park High School
 Team Academy
 The Hun School
 The Peddie School
 Union Catholic High School
 University High School
 Westtown School



*Reflection upon Graduation
 by Da'Vion Louis '08*

*"As we come to the end of our Link journey
 We must always remember
 That the world is forever
 Turning
 Time will go on
 And we can no longer
 Prolong
 Our future aspirations and dreams
 We can achieve anything no matter how
 difficult the odds may seem
 As we move on to the next step in life
 We must always let our spirits take flight
 To another level, another plane
 Although times will never be the same
 Because of Link we have the strength to
 endure
 The strife and pain*

OUR ALUMNI

The Link Class of '04 graduated from high school in June of 2008. We are proud of their accomplishments and are pleased to announce they planned to attend the following colleges in the fall of 2008:

Art Institute of Philadelphia
 Bloomfield College
 Cheney University
 College of St. Elizabeth
 Dean College
 Essex County College
 Fairleigh Dickinson University
 Georgian Court College

Johnson C. Smith University
 Kean University
 Lincoln University
 Montclair State University
 Morgan State University
 Providence College
 Ramapo College of New Jersey
 Rider University

Rutgers University
 St. Joseph's College
 Seton Hall University
 Smith College
 Stanford University
 University of Michigan
 University of Scranton
 William Patterson College

Thank you!

We thank our many supporters - foundations, corporations, civic groups, churches and individuals - whose generosity helped Link fulfill its mission in the 2007-2008 school year.

Founder's Circle \$75,000 and up

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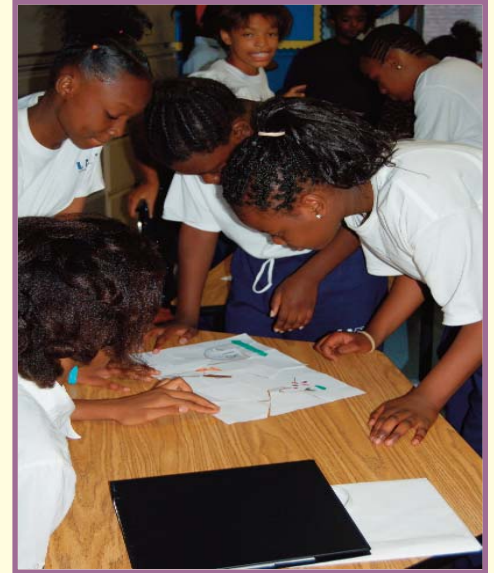
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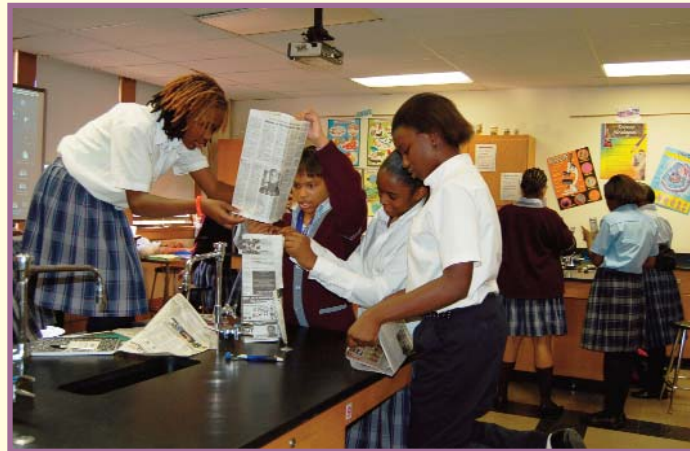
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 New Jersey Devils
 New Jersey Jackals
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 New York Football Giants

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 The Newark Club
 Theater Square Grill
 Tiffany & Co
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 WBGO
 Melanie Winstead
 Woodrow's Cafe & Caterers



We have made every effort to accurately list all who made gifts to Link Community School for the 2007-2008 school year. If misspellings, omissions or other errors have been made, please accept our apology and bring the error to the attention of Link's Office of Institutional Advancement at development@linkschool.org or (973) 642-5343.

10th ANNUAL A TASTE OF NEWARK

November 1, 2007

New Jersey Performing Arts Center

Newark, New Jersey

Honoring Sister Vivien Jennings, O.P. and the Sisters of St. Dominic, Caldwell, NJ, founders of Link Community School

Premier Sponsors

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Carol and Chris Garavente
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Shannon and David Seeberan
Toyota Financial Services, Eastern Region
Susan and Rich Tutino
Willis Honda



A TASTE OF NEWARK, cont'd



Restaurants

- Anheuser– Busch
- Applebee’s Neighborhood Grill & Bar
- A Taste of Soul, Caterers
- Ciao Bella Gelato
- Classic Caterers/Sandwich Den
- Compass Group/Eurest Dining Services
- Energy Bar
- Food For Life Supreme
- Frungillo Caterers/The Mezzanine
@ 744 Broad Street
- Fusion Caterers
- John’s Place
- New Life Café
- Sage Dining Services, Inc.
- Sandwiches Unlimited
- Sisters of Soul
- Theater Square Grill
- The Halal Sandwich Shop
- The Newark Club
- Woodrow’s Café & Caterers



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6th ANNUAL GOLF OUTING

September 24, 2007
Metedeconk National Golf Club
Jackson, NJ

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Lunch Sponsor

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Art Stern



FINANCIAL SUMMARY

From the Link Community School Audited Financial Statements
Statement of Activities for the year ended June 30, 2008

<u>Revenues, Gains and Other Support</u>	<u>Unrestricted</u>	<u>Restricted</u>	<u>Total</u>
Foundation grants	\$ 718,473	\$ -	\$ 718,473
Contributions	1,244,599	77,435	1,322,034
Donations in kind	140,932	-	140,932
Contributed services	58,988	-	58,988
Parent subsidy	224,726	-	224,726
Food service program	38,679	-	38,679
Investment income	99,027	-	99,027
Net unrealized gain (loss) on investments	(10,624)	-	(10,624)
Miscellaneous fees and other	<u>11,168</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>11,168</u>
	2,525,970	77,435	2,603,405
Net assets released from restriction	<u>126,147</u>	<u>(126,147)</u>	<u>-</u>
Total Revenue, Gains and Other Support	\$2,652,117	(48,712)	\$2,603,405
 <u>Expenses</u>			
Instruction	\$ 1,152,813	-	\$1,152,813
Employee benefits	368,939	-	368,939
Administrative	149,647	-	149,647
Contributed services	58,988	-	58,988
Operation of plant	94,727	-	94,727
Maintenance of plant	72,036	-	72,036
Food service program	39,706	-	39,706
Student activities	130,316	-	130,316
Fundraising and development	383,595	-	383,595
Donations in kind	140,932	-	140,932
Feasibility Study	<u>26,293</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>26,293</u>
Total Operating Expenses	2,617,992	-	2,617,992
Change in Net Assets	34,125	(48,712)	(14,587)
Net assets, beginning of year	<u>2,508,363</u>	<u>190,002</u>	<u>2,698,365</u>
Net assets, end of year	\$2,542,488	\$ 141,290	\$2,683,778



A complete copy of Link Community School Financial Statements and Additional Information, Years Ended June 30, 2008 and 2007, prepared by independent auditors, Pustorino, Puglisi & Co., LLP, New York, NY, is available from the Link Office of Institutional Advancement upon request.

Assets

	<u>2008</u>	<u>2007</u>
<u>Current Assets</u>		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 306,439	\$ 605,331
Accounts receivable	137,336	66,312
Investments	2,277,474	1,819,081
Prepaid expenses	<u>31,503</u>	<u>14,561</u>
Total current assets	2,752,752	2,505,285
<u>Fixed Assets</u>		
Property, plant and equipment	761,282	686,500
Less: accumulated depreciation	<u>408,661</u>	<u>363,249</u>
Net property, plant and equipment	352,621	323,251
Total Assets	\$3,105,373	\$2,828,536
<u>Liabilities and Net Assets</u>		
<u>Current Liabilities</u>		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$ 30,503	\$ 24,801
Unearned income	<u>391,092</u>	<u>105,370</u>
Total Liabilities	421,595	130,171
<u>Net Assets</u>		
Unrestricted	2,542,488	2,508,363
Temporarily Restricted	<u>141,290</u>	<u>190,002</u>
Total Net Assets	2,683,778	2,698,365
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$3,105,373	\$2,828,536

OUR LINK TEAM

Administration

Marnie G. McKoy, M.A.	Principal
Mary Ball Cappio	Director of Finance and Facility
Keisha Cleveland	Vice Principal, Director of Studies
Maria Pilar Paradiso, J.D.	Vice Principal, Director of Institutional Advancement



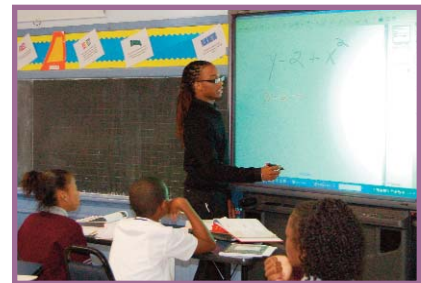
Student Services

Arlene Baiardi, R.N.	Nurse
Aaron Betcher	Director of Student and Alumni Affairs
Pryce Mandel, J.D.	Director of Technology
Jeffrey Pate, M.Ed.	Dean of Students
Thomas Steinfeld, M.A.T.	Special Education Teacher
Karen Thomas	Title 1 Tutor
Robyn White, M.S.W., L.S.W.	Social Worker
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Institutional Advancement

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Keva Berutti	Art
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Deon Freeman	Physical Education
Daniel Hannon	Health/Computer, Jesuit Volunteer
Tony Hall	Math
Errol LaGuerre	Science
Eric Nelson, M.S.	History
Antoinette Perry	Music/Theater Arts/Spanish
Darryl Powell, '94	Math
Daniel Raffety, M.A.	History
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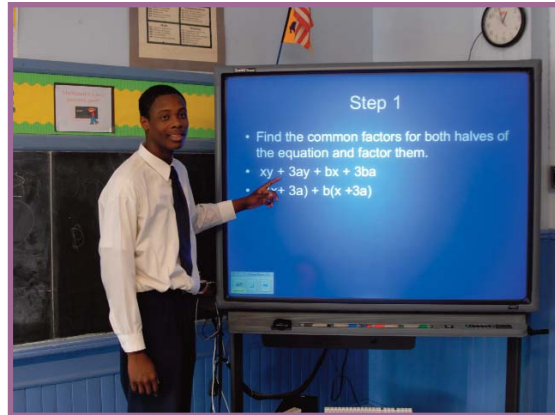
Corporate Matching Gifts: A company or foundation that matches gifts to non-profit organizations can often double or triple your contribution. Corporate matching forms can usually be obtained from your company's Philanthropy or Matching Gift Program office and sent to Link for completion.

Bequests: A bequest is a gift you make by naming Link Community School in your will and can be made when drawing up your will or by adding a codicil later on. Such a gift can be made for a specific amount, a portion of the estate, or a remainder share. Bequests may provide tax benefits to the estate.

Gifts-in-Kind: Link is grateful for donations of goods and services that can benefit the school. Periodically, the staff identifies items for a "wish list", which can be found on our website.

Gift of Time: Volunteers may have time, a talent, or a professional skill that could benefit Link and would be greatly appreciated by the school community. Tutors are especially needed.

Sponsor a Student: An individual, group, company, church or organization can sponsor the Link education of an individual student. Sponsorship may be for one or two years, and can be made through a flexible installment payment option or as an annual gift.



For more information or to make a gift, please contact:

Maria Pilar Paradiso

Vice Principal, Director of Institutional Advancement

Link Community School

120 Livingston Street, Newark, NJ 07103

Phone: 973-642-5343 Fax: 973-642-1978

E-mail: development@linkschool.org

Gifts to Link qualify as charitable deductions as outlined in the United States Internal Revenue Code. A copy of Link's letter of determination of paragraph 501(c)(3) status is available upon request.

LINK COMMUNITY SCHOOL

120 Livingston Street

Newark, NJ 07103

973.642.5343

www.linkschool.org