

The *Link* School

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# STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK

## **Dear Students & Parents:**

We trust that you are enrolled at Link because you are seeking something beyond the traditional classroom that will challenge, inspire and nurture you - a program that will link you with a true sense of your identity - and we are confident that you are going to find what you are looking for with us at Link. Our aim is for Link to be an experience like you have while at camp, but accompanied by high quality academics.

The value of an alternative residential high school program resonates with me because I was the kind of student who needed something more engaging than the traditional classroom. An alternative high school program helped me get on track, engaged me with an experiential education program, laid a foundation for sound decision making, and helped me become a contributing citizen.

Our sincere hope is that the Link School will provide for you the kind of quality academics that will help you really engage in your own learning, expeditions and projects that will help you expand, service opportunities that will help you look beyond self, and spiritual exploration that will help you deepen.

This handbook is designed to help you prepare for coming out to Link. It is an overview and you may have many questions that are not answered here, so please call or email us with anything that it would help you to have more information about. Also, please note that this is a progressive document and that there will be changes and additions throughout the school year ranging from courses offered to gear needed, etc.

This is a dynamic learning environment. Come ready to give, to learn, and to make it a life changing experience for yourself and the rest of the community!

Bobby Lewis - Director

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# LINK MISSION AND OUTCOMES

## **Mission:**

The Link School is life-preparation focused and offers its students an experiential high school program through a mosaic of college-prep academics, individual projects, service opportunities, wilderness experiences, and spiritual exploration. The Link School emphasizes project-based education in an environment that cultivates curiosity, self-directed learning, resourcefulness, and problem solving.

## **Outcomes:**

Graduates of The Link School will be:

### **Linked to the Divine** - *as evidenced by their:*

- spirituality, integrity, and sense of spiritual self worth
- compassionate & respectful relationships with others
- stewardship for the natural environment

### **Academically Ready** – *as evidenced by their:*

- successful completion of a college-prep curriculum
- critical and analytical thinking skills developed through application in the classroom and connections through experiential programs
- self-designed units of study including long-term projects and presentations of learning

### **Prepared for life** - *as evidenced by their:*

- curiosity for learning in varied academic, natural, and cultural environments
- engagement in meaningful work
- purposeful recreation (*a little more full instead of a little more empty*)

### **Contributing citizens** - *as evidenced by their:*

- service to their communities
- passion for life
- making a difference for good through prayer and action

# COMMUNITY PRINCIPLES

Integrity-Compassion-Stewardship-Curiosity-Spiritual Seeking - are qualities that are core to our community practices. In addition, each new school year students and staff come together to develop and define what we specifically want the community principles of the school to be for that year and how we want to work together and function as a community.

## EXPECTATIONS

As a “Life Prep” program at Link, it is our expectation that students will engage to the best of their ability in all areas of the Link program and that the result of doing so will be that they are prepared for life as engaged learners, confident contributors, thoughtful citizens, and spiritual thinkers.

Rather than being rules-based and focused on what not to do, Link is a community focused on whom to be and what to do.

Simply, it is our expectation that students will:

1. make personal choices that bless and strengthen them, and,
2. treat others as they want to be treated.

## PROGRAMS:

Experiential Learning Overview

### **Core Concepts:**

The experiential education curriculum at The Link School has five key components:

- I. Academics
- II. Expeditions
- III. Individually Mentored Projects
- IV. Service Work
- V. Spiritual Development

### **I. Academic Plan**

**The academic program** is designed and taught by the school’s faculty. Courses are taught in multi-age settings with grade-appropriate assignments, resources, and assessments. Link School courses are experiential by design and include a wide variety of assessments, including, but not limited to, portfolios, presentations of learning (POLs), field experiences both local and abroad, fieldwork, blogs, group problem-solving, and authentic assessments such as writing for publication. Extensive use of technology is a critical component of the curriculum.

Students pursue individualized learning plans (ILPs), individual projects and group activities. Some credits are earned through successful mastery of college preparatory core subjects; others by self-directed student explorations. In general, for three weeks of each month, students will work on their ILP through Link's project based courses and then have time in the afternoons for personal projects, and group recreation and service activities. The other week of each month will be spent on a wilderness expedition.

### **Student Assessments & Placement**

The Education Director and Academic Advisor work together with each student and his/her parents to review their previous work and determine appropriate course placements at start of term. Standardized tests may be used to assist in appropriate placement.

### **Individual Learning Plans - ILPs**

ILPs are developed for each student based on their grade, previous course work completed, and goals for either a college prep track or aiming for high school graduation and then vocational courses.

### **Transferring Link Credits to other High Schools**

The Link School is fully accredited with the North Central Association, recently re-named AdvancED.

### **Standardized Tests**

Standardized testing: Freshmen through juniors will register to take the PSAT (Pre-Scholastic Aptitude Test) in October. This preliminary exam gives students practice in taking standardized tests before results from such exams become part of their record for college. Students and faculty receive detailed PSAT score reports. As part of the college admission process, upperclassmen will also take SAT and/or ACT exams, depending on the requirements per college. Students are responsible for SAT/ACT test fees.

### **On-line Research**

Students gain access for on-line research sites through Bill Fabian, the librarian at Buena Vista High School, and our Social Studies & History teacher.

### **Academic, College and Career Advising**

Link teachers meet with students one-on-one at least four times a year to discuss academic progress, and academic goal setting, done both at the beginning and middle of each semester. We focus on each student's goals, whether those be to attend college, a vocational school, or begin work, and how Link can support each student. In addition, each senior is guided through the college application process, including all support necessary for taking standardized tests.

A letter will be sent to parents of Juniors and Seniors outlining the steps Link's College Advisor will be taking with the student and the role parents can play in college preparation.

### **Project Based Learning (PBL) Overview**

The Link School works to ground academic learning in real life experiences and employs PBL as a systematic teaching method that engages students in learning knowledge and skills through an extended inquiry process structured around complex, authentic questions and carefully designed products and tasks.

Driving Question: A central part of Project Based Learning is the selection of a theme or "driving question" for each academic year. For this year's theme, see the Appendix.

### **Assessment - Grading:**

Assessments are done in a narrative fashion and "A," "B," "C," "D," and "I" letter grades. Assessments are developed appropriate for the student's skills and grade level. "I" represents an Incomplete and students are given the opportunity to complete their work and earn a passing grade.

### **Attendance Policy:**

**Attendance:** Attendance requirements at The Link School is equal to or greater than the minimum number of days and hours required by the state of Colorado, which is 1056 hours and 160 days (Title 22, Colorado Revised Statutes: Education Article 33, School attendance Law of 1963, Section 104).

**Excused Absences** include all absences for reasons beyond the control of you or your family, such as illness/injury, appointments, or a family emergency. If you are not able to get or complete work from the teachers to do while you are away from school, it is expected that the work will be made up within a period of time no longer than the time missed from school. Teachers will determine when missed exams are to be made up.

Parents may also request from time to time for students to miss class time for family events or trips, but such absences should not be a regular occurrence due to the stress it can put on a student's academic responsibilities.

**Unexcused Absences** are defined as absences from class or school without proper authority from home or the school. Parents or legal guardians will be notified immediately of any unexcused absence. The academic penalty for an unexcused absence will be a daily grade of "0" in every class missed, with no makeup privilege. Additional consequences may include disciplinary action – probation, suspension or expulsion.

### **Block Courses**

From time-to-time, Link courses are instructed in blocks. On those days, rather than rotating from class to class each hour, students spend the entire day, or multiple days, on one interactive subject and corresponding project.

### **Presentations of Learning – POLs**

Students conclude each term with Presentations of Learning that display to the community the students' knowledge and development in a given subject area, or from their project work.

### **Whole School Learning Community – WSLC**

Link staff do not view students as empty vessels that need to be filled with knowledge by teachers. Link teachers facilitate and teach, but also openly join students as learners and coconspirators in the quest for understanding. Link staff also share what they are working on professionally and personally through POLs. Lastly, staff work to honor students' input by engaging students in academic and community problem solving and not just imparting solutions.

### **Graduation requirements**

The graduation requirements listed are minimum requirements. Students interested in attending highly selective colleges are expected and encouraged to complete more academic coursework.

English	4 credits
Mathematics	3 credits
Modern Languages	2 credits
Science	3 credits
Social Studies/History	3 credits
Electives	8 credits
<u>Physical Education</u>	<u>1 minimum</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>23 credits + 1 PE</b> (a minimum for graduation)

### **Course Requirements for an Academic Year at Link**

English	1 credit
Mathematics	1 credit
Spanish	1 credit
Science	1 credit
Social Studies	1 credit
Electives	1 or more credits
<u>Physical Education</u>	<u>1 PE credit</u>
<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>6 (minimum) + 1 PE</b>

### **Portfolios**

Students prepare a portfolio of completed work as a key graduation component including: course work, photos, writing samples, projects, expeditionary

accomplishments, service work, personal code, athletics, entrepreneurial work, & presentations of learning (POLs).

### **Diplomas**

High School diplomas are awarded to students who have completed graduation requirements.

### **AP (Advanced Placement) courses**

Courses are available and offered on request as independent study.

### **College Courses**

Courses are available through a local satellite of Colorado Mountain College.

### **Academic Integrity**

The Link School cultivates honesty in every area of a person's life. Academic integrity means that the student or teacher guarantees that work turned in as his or her own is in fact original, unless properly cited.

Any instance of academic cheating, copying other's homework, or plagiarism is a serious offense. Copying and pasting information is common, but the student is responsible for learning proper methods of paraphrasing or citing information so that another's ideas are not represented as one's own.

Consequences for academic dishonesty are a grade of zero on the assignment and, if the situation continues, possible suspension from school.

## **II. Expeditions**

Approximately one week a month is spent out on learning expeditions, which the students help plan. Expeditions include - river running, horse packing, backpacking, mountain biking, sea kayaking, surfing, rock climbing, canyoneering, foreign travel, etc. The purpose of these trips is to help students learn planning skills, develop leadership and responsibility, challenge them physically, give them a laboratory to put their spiritual beliefs into practice, provide good fodder for quality writing and photography, and to engage them in a dynamic natural sciences environment. The adventure component of The Link School is accredited through the Association for Experiential Education ([www.aee.org](http://www.aee.org)).

### **Instruction and skills development program will be offered in:**

- Campcraft & Leave No Trace principles
- Backpacking
- Canyoneering
- Mountaineering
- Rock Climbing – bouldering, gym climbing, outdoor cragging
- Ropes Course

- Caving
- Peak climbing
- Horsemanship
- Biking – mountains and roads
- Solos
- Rivers & Whitewater canoeing, kayaking & rafting
- Ocean surfing, sailing, sea kayaking
- Winter elements and activities including snowshoeing, downhill skiing/snowboarding, cross-country skiing, snow caves, and ice climbing.

### **Expedition Leadership Levels - raven, bighorn, wolf**

Levels will be based on...

- planning and preparation
  - skill development and demonstrated competence
  - communication
  - peer leadership
  - expedition mentality: decision making, responsibility & judgment
  - fitness
  - service to the group
  - dealing with adversity
  - spiritual self awareness & readiness
- Levels will be awarded by a self-nomination process. Students who desire to be considered for a level should write a one-page letter to staff addressing the criteria and how they feel they have met it. Staff will either give the level or come back to the student with a checklist of things to work on to achieve the level.

#### **Level I Raven – General Requirements**

- Assist with trip preparation
- Participate in educational components
- Serve as Leader of the Day – help plan, navigate, group communication, & meals
- Demonstrate expedition mentality
- Support others who are in leadership roles
- Serve the needs of the group
- Be spiritually aware
  - Contribute to inspirational meetings before & during trips
- Practice low impact camping
- Interact with the natural environment with a sense of stewardship
- Help in cooking and cleaning as well as camp set-up and clean up on overnights
- Help with derig

#### **Level I Raven – Backcountry – Additional Requirements**

- Know how to set up a tarp & tent
  - Tautline &/or truckers hitch demonstrated

- Be able to light and operate a stove
- Understand how to orient and read a topo map
- Be capable of spotting others through difficult terrain
- Demonstrate solid movement skills in technical or exposed terrain
- Belay certified

### **Level I Raven – River – Additional Requirements**

- Define the construction and parts of a raft, kayak & canoe
- Define the construction and parts of a paddle
- Explain the seating arrangements for paddle rafts
- Participate in all loading and unloading of rafts and equipment
- Know the five commands used in a paddle raft
- Explain self rescue techniques and how to swim and maneuver in a rapid
- Captain a class I rapid or above
- Co-captain a class II rapid or above
- Learn the basics of rowing an oar boat and row a Class I rapid or above
- Help in loading and unloading of rafts

### **Level I Raven – Horsemanship – Additional Requirements**

- Know what knots to tie, when, and how for securing your horse
- Know how to properly act around a horse
- Know what tack to use and when
- Know how to fit and adjust saddle properly
- Be alert to the horses' feed and water
- Know where the appropriate place to keep your tack
- Keep the tack clean
- Know the parts of a horse and both types of saddles and bridles
- Know how to, and properly demonstrate an emergency dismount
- Know what the barrel, keyhole and pole patterns are; or the difference between a cavaletti, a cross rail and an oxer jump
- Know the rules for polocrosse and know how to pass a polocrosse ball at a walk on horseback
- Successfully take your horse through a cavaletti pattern

### **Level II Bighorn – General Requirements**

- Trip Manage an expedition including preparation, briefing, menu planning and shopping, leadership, problem solving, debrief, de-rig
- Demonstrate an increase in quality of communication, preparation, tone setting and leadership from Raven level
- Demonstrate competent personal campcraft and expeditionary skills
- Complete a backcountry, overnight solo
- Have a high level of person fitness
- Problem solve and handle adversity
- Exude initiative in camp clean-up, set-up, cooking and cleaning on overnights

### **Level II Bighorn – Backcountry – Additional Requirements**

- Be able to tie the bowline and follow through figure 8
- Have solid rappel skills
- Be able to climb 5.8 rock
- Working knowledge of GPS, Spot, and compass

### **Level II Bighorn – River – Additional Requirements**

- Demonstrate a working knowledge of the major types of river rapids, currents and waves and some of the major river hazards of rafting
- Demonstrate how to ferry across a river
- Demonstrate how to eddy out
- Navigate a bend in a river
- Co-captain and captain a Class III rapid or above in a paddle boat
- Row a Class II rapid or above
- Swim a Class I rapid.
- Kayak a Class I rapid
- Demonstrate proper throw line technique
- Name the major components of a rapid, e.g. types of currents, waves, holes, etc.

### **Level II Bighorn – Horsemanship – Additional Requirements**

- Know how to fit and adjust bridle properly
- Know how to load and unload a horse from the trailer
- Know how to lunge your horse with a lunge line
- Know how to put on polo wraps & easy boots
- Know how and when (what temperature) to bathe your horse
- Be able to do walk/trot/canter transitions cleanly
- Be able to identify the right diagonals and leads
- Be able to run the barrels within 30 seconds or successfully jump your horse 1.5'
- Be able to pass a polocrosse ball at the trot or canter
- Know how to blanket a horse

### **Level II+ – Bighorn Full Curl**

Wolf level will take most students two years of work to accomplish. If a student makes significant progress towards Wolf and has not yet completed it, they may submit for II+ and keep working on it the following year.

### **Level III Wolf – General Requirements** (may take 2 or more years to accomplish)

- Trip Leader: research, plan, prepare, communicate, execute, lead, heal, unite, teach, problem solve, debrief, de-rig, an expedition
- Solo: 3-day fasting, identity vision “who am I and who is God calling me to be.”
- Chesty Puller Leadership Principles understood and practiced: be technically (skills) and tactically (planning) proficient, know your people, set the example (integrity, compassion, curiosity, spiritual seeking, stewardship)
- Servant leadership exemplified
- Excellent personal fitness
- Skills mastery in campcraft, navigation, and backcountry

- Wilderness 1st Aid Certified
- Skills mastery in campcraft & navigation
- Demonstrate an understanding and practice of sound backcountry judgment including the STAR model and decision making matrix

### **Level III Wolf – Backcountry – Additional Requirements**

- Be able to lead 5.9 rock
- Know how to build an anchor for climbs or rappels
- Demonstrate sound leadership judgment in regards to route finding & weather

### **Level III Wolf – River – Additional Requirements**

- Display knowledge of safety standards and give group safety talk
- Understand techniques and steps to take when dislodging a wrapped raft hung up on rocks. Set up a Z-Drag and a Pig Rig
- Have a working knowledge of 4 knots (figure 8, bowline, prussic, and water knot).
- Know techniques for repairing rips and holes in rafts, and assist in minor repairs
- Co-captain and captain a Class IV rapid in a paddle boat
- Row a Class III rapid
- Swim a Class II rapid.
- Kayak a Class II rapid or above and learn to roll
- Explain the rapid rating scale
- Swiftwater Rescue certified

### **Level III Wolf – Horsemanship – Additional Requirements**

- Know how to lunge your horse without a lunge line in the round pen
- Know the different types of bridles and their uses (bits, martingales, etc.)
- Referee a polocrosse game; or compete in a Pair Pace
- Jump your horse a height of 2.5'
- Work on helping a horse overcome a training issue – approved by Natalie

### **Rock Climbing**

The climbing program at Link is primarily based on top rope climbs set up by staff for students. However, the students will also have the opportunity to learn to lead climb in the gym at A/U, as well as climb routes on local crags, and also, from time to time, climb moderate multi pitch trad and alpine routes with an appropriately American Mountain Guide Association AMGA (or equivalent) trained and certified rock/alpine guides. Students pursuing the backcountry track for Expedition Leadership Levels have required skills objectives for rock climbing as well, including belaying, top rope climbing, and leading.

#### **Basic Knots**

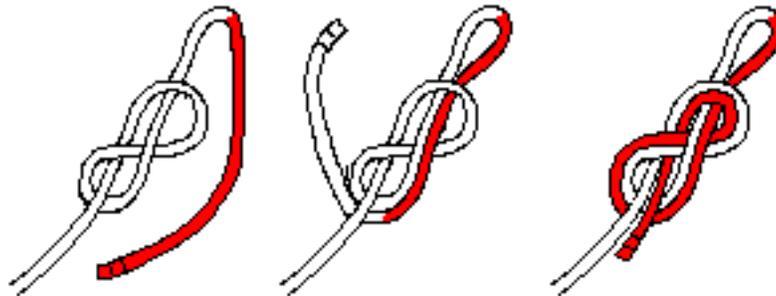
##### **Figure 8**

The first step of tying in to the rope to climb.



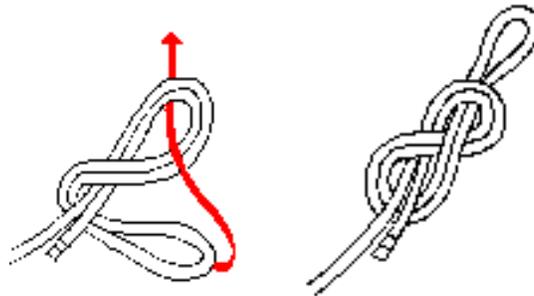
**Figure 8 Follow-Thru.**

You must have a tail at least as long as your fist for the knot to be safe. Check that the knot is snug and clean whenever possible. If the tail is longer than 2 fists length, tie off the extra rope using a fisherman's knot.



**Figure 8 on a Bight.**

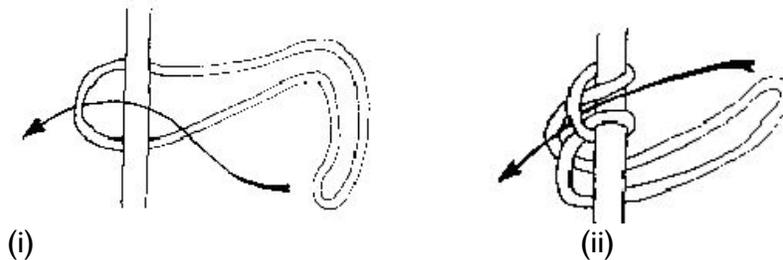
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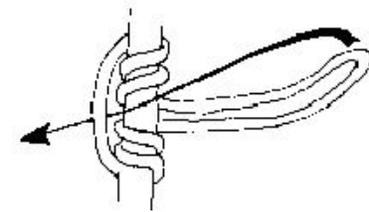


**Prusik.**

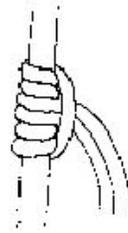
Used to attach a prusik sling to a rope for belay transfer or rescue situations.

The knot starts by forming a girth hitch.



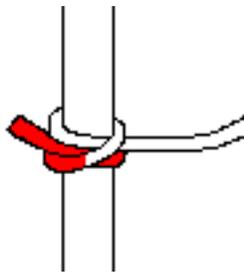
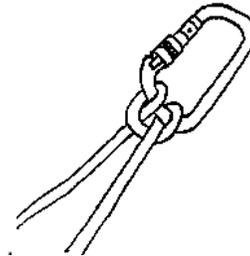
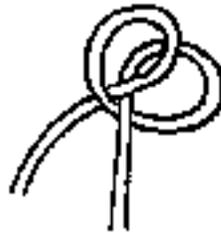


(iii)



(iv)

### Clove Hitch.



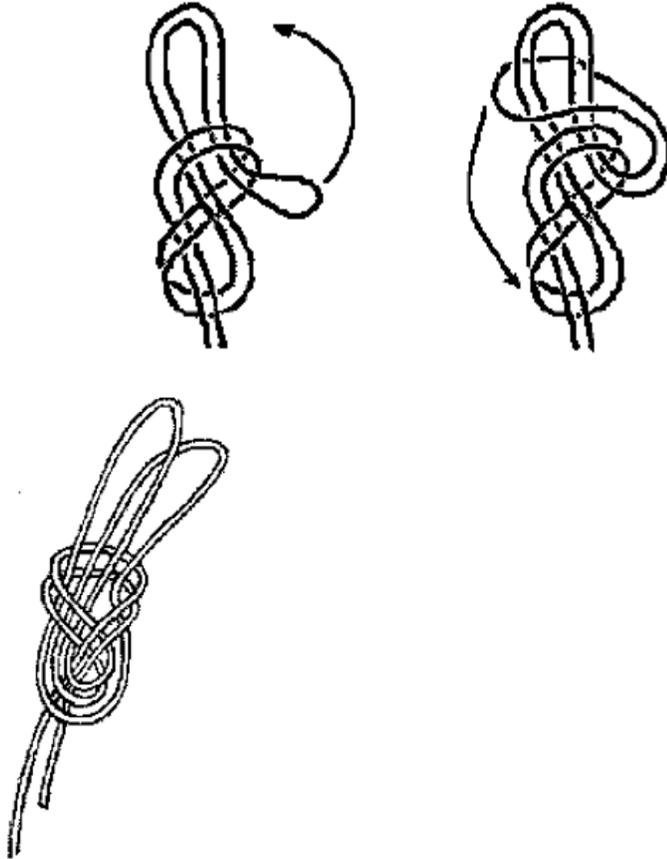
### Double Fisherman's

Used to attach two ends of rope together (or flat overhand). This is the knot used to create a prussic sling. Tails must be long enough that the knot will be secure. This knot can become very tight. Half of a double fisherman's can also be used as the "safety knot" on the tail of a figure 8 follow-through.



### Double Figure 8

Start tying a figure 8 on a bight. Instead of pulling the end through to create a knot with one bight, pull a bight through at the point you would normally finish the knot. The bight then gets looped over the rest of the knot, leaving two “dog-ear” loops at the top of the knot. The double loops that students clip into make this knot redundant and the extra loops in the 8 make it easier to untie.

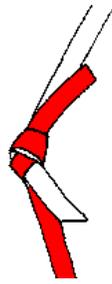


### Girth Hitch

Used to sling a tree or boulder when setting up top-rope anchors. It is also the first step of tying a prussic knot.

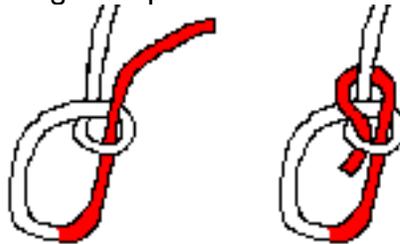
### Water Knot

Used to attach two ends of webbing.



### Bowline

Used to attach string to tarps



Belaying. Belaying is fundamental to climbing.

A belay system requires:

**Friction.** Friction helps the belayer resist the force created by falling climber. Friction is most significant when the brake hand is in the “braking position”.

**Position.** The belayer’s body position should be oriented toward the anticipated force. Standing with one leg forward can significantly affect your ability to belay someone heavier than you.

**Anchor.** The anchor backs up the belayer’s position. The belayer must be anchored in if belaying a lead climber that weighs more than the belayer. Students can help belay by holding on to a staff’s harness as an “anchor.”

**Communication.** Effective communication is essential. Always double check the system (harnesses, helmets, hardware, knots) before climbing and use climbing signals listed below.

### Technique:

We have chosen the “BUS” method of belaying as our standard procedure. Students are able to belay others after getting “belay certified.”

- B** = Brake. Guide hand and brake hand combine efforts to pull up the slack. Then, immediately brake off.
- U** = Under. Guide hand grabs the brake rope (never the belay device) under (or above) the braking hand.
- S** = Slide. Brake hand slides as close as possible to the belay device.

### Climbing Signals

<u>Belayer</u>	<u>Climber</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
Belay's On.	On Belay?	Is the belay ready yet? All set. The belay will catch you if you fall
Takes in slack. No verbal answer needed.	Up Rope.	There's slack in the rope. Take in all the loose rope.
Gives a little slack.	Slack	I need slack in the rope.
Takes in slack and assumes braking position.	Take/Tension	Take up all slack. My weight is coming onto the rope.
Assumes braking position.	Falling!	
Climb on.	Climbing	I'm climbing – often said after falling or taking a rest on the rope Go ahead. I'm actively belaying.
Belay off.	Off belay.	I am secure and no longer need a belay. I am no longer keeping you secure
Rappel On.	Rappelling	I'm beginning to rappel. You're all set to rappel.

### Other Signals

“Rock” – an immediate warning shouted to all below to protect themselves from a dislodged rock or other falling object including gear.

“Rope” – yelled out to let other know that a rope is about to be thrown down or pulled through the anchors after climbing

“That’s Me” – yelled by the climber before they have started climbing as the belayer takes up slack and the rope is now tight to the climber (not needed in our typical slingshot set-ups)

Sometimes the climbing signals get crossed when there are more than one or two climbers climbing at the same time. If this is likely to happen, use the person’s name after the command: “Off belay, Yvonne.”

### STUDENTS BELAYING – Safety Policies

#### • Students must

- Have a UIAA approved harness, belay device (no figure 8s), locking carabiner, helmet in good working order – and know how to use them. No hip-belyas, Munter hitches, swami belts, etc. Auto locking devices like the GriGri may be used if the student is appropriately trained in their operation and checked for correct set up.
- Attend a Link instructor led belay school. Demonstrate the BUS belay method, follow through figure 8 tie in and two handed lower. Have a back-up belayer for a minimum of 2 sessions.
- Pass The Link School’s belay test before belaying a climber. Test is during the 3<sup>rd</sup> session and should comprise of tie in, belay, and lower, with no coaching and no mistakes.
- Use only The Link School’s ropes while climbing with The Link School.
- Wear a helmet while climbing and belaying outdoors.
- Tie a knot in the end of the belay line or be tied in prior to climber ascending.
- Be anchored if the climber they are belaying is significantly larger or the terrain is exposed.
- A spreadsheet is maintained in the office for staff to check each students belay cert progress before heading out.

### STUDENTS LEADING – Safety Policies

- Leaders will begin with mock leads both indoors and out where they are being top roped while practicing the leading process. Routes should be chosen that are at least 2 grades below the climbers top rope ability.
- All lead climbers and lead belayers must have first passed The Link School’s “Lead Test.”
- The lead test will be on 5.9 rock and must be led with no mistakes in clipping, no falls or hanging rests, and proper change over to lowering. Results should be recorded on the spreadsheet in the office.
- All clips must be made safely before the entire body passes them, and in the order that they appear on that climb. Also, the final cold shuts or anchor carabiners must be clipped before lowering.
- Student leaders will be belayed by staff.
- Lead climbers must know how to recognize back clips, twist clips, and Z-clips, and realize that they are dangerous and must be reversed before climbing on.

- Lead climbers must demonstrate on the ground how to change over to lowering, and carry appropriate gear to do so.
- Quickdraws or other hardware must be UIAA approved.
- If a second will be top roping the lead, a minimum of two bolts must be used for the top rope set-up.

#### LINK STUDENT CERTIFICATION LEVELS:

- Top Rope Climb
- Top Rope Belay
- Lead Belay –
- Lead Climb – sport indoor
- Lead Climb – sport outdoor
- Lead Climb – trad

#### ICE CLIMBING - Safety Policies

- Staff will set all ice routes. Students will follow while being belayed by staff.
- Careful attention will be paid to environmental hazards while ice climbing – falling ice in particular and keeping belayers and climbers in as safe a zone as possible.

#### BOULDERING

- The practice of climbing on rock close enough to the ground that safety can be ensured by spotting. Belays are not used.
- Climbers should not boulder above their spotter's head, approximately 12' for the climber's hands.
- Spotters should be briefed regarding spotting techniques – Physical Act, Communication, Attitude – Hands up, one foot forward and one back.
- Helmets should be worn for outdoor bouldering.
- Students should never boulder by themselves.
- Bouldering pads should be used when possible.
- Bouldering where a fall could be dangerous is not bouldering but is free solo climbing. Free solo climbing is not a part of the Link program.

#### RAPPELLING - Safety Policies

- Prevent obstructions to a smooth rappel by tucking away long hair, clothing, or anything that could get stuck in the rap device.
- Always belay the rappeller with an belayed rope backup or fireman's from below

#### Personal Rappelling Safety:

- Tie a knot at the end of the rope. This will ensure you don't rap off the end of the rope.
- Always make sure you clip into both strands of rope if you are rappelling on two strands. Otherwise, you'll pull one end of the rope through the anchors.

- Do not rappel from questionable looking slings that have been left behind by previous parties. U.V. light weakens them quickly.
- Extend the rap device in order to pre-rig as needed.
- Put a back up on your rap rope – preferably a prussic or auto block below your device.
- You can belay a rappeller by pulling down tightly on the rappel ropes (firemans). This is not as reliable as a top belay and should be used for climbers who have experience rappelling.

### Guests Climbing with The Link School

To climb with The Link School program, you must be at least 18 years of age or have written consent of a parent or legal guardian. In addition, all climbers must fill out The Link School waiver, and pass a safety test for top roping or bouldering, and a more rigorous “lead” test for lead climbing or lead belaying.

### All guest climbers must:

- Be at least 18 years of age (or have written consent of a parent or legal guardian).
  - Waiver signed before climbing.
- Demonstrate how to tie a retraceable figure eight knot (and use only this knot while climbing with The Link School).
- Have a UIAA approved harness, belay device (no figure 8s), locking carabiner, helmet in good working order – and know how to use them. No hip-belays, Munter hitches, swami belts, etc.
- Have a back-up belayer for a minimum of 2 sessions.
- Pass The Link School’s belay test before belaying a climber.
- Demonstrate how to lower a climber correctly with 2 hands on brake strand.
- Always have a spotter when bouldering, and understand that you may be risking serious injury, death, or dismemberment if climbing unspotted.
- Never boulder with any part of your body above a height of 12 feet.
- Use only The Link School’s ropes while climbing with The Link School.
- Allow right-of-way to other climbers who were first on route or any given section of the crag.
- Stay clear of all climbing areas when not climbing, belaying, or spotting – as other climbers may fall unexpectedly from above.
- Wear a helmet while climbing and belaying.
- All guest lead climbers and lead belayers must have first passed The Link School’s “Lead Test.”

### **International Travel**

Passport: each student needs a valid passport prior to beginning of the school year. Students also need a notarized Letter of Approval for international travel. Forms will be provided.

## **Expedition Gear**

Group gear is provided by The Link School and is checked out from OutCamp by the students for each expedition.

### Check in and out procedures

A damage deposit of \$200 will be collected from each student at the beginning of the school year. Students can check out backpacks, sleeping bags, sleeping pads, and rain gear. If all equipment is returned undamaged (normal wear and tear is expected), then the \$200 deposit will be returned after the end of the school year.

## **Safety & “Expedition Mentality”**

The success of any expedition is largely dependent on participants taking on an “expedition mentality.” Specifically defined, that means thinking in a way that takes the safety & success of the group and one’s own well-being into account. Making a poor choice and being injured 5 days from the trailhead and vehicles is a very different situation than when one is near the care and comforts of home. When out in the backcountry make conservative decisions for oneself and out of respect for the group. Having to abort an expedition to carry someone out who was injured doing something without thinking is really a drag for all (no pun intended).

## **Afternoons, Evenings & Weekend Activities**

### Afternoons: the following is a general outline:

- 2 afternoons per week on individual projects
- 2 afternoons per week on service work or entrepreneurial work
- 2 afternoons per week in group activities
  - o Team sports: ultimate Frisbee, soccer, basketball, etc.
  - o Team building: initiatives, ropes course, rafting, etc.
  - o Individual challenge: climbing, fishing, caving, kayaking, exploration, ski & snowboard, Frisbee golf, orienteering, etc.
- Sunday afternoons are student free-time
- Discretionary reading time is provided each afternoon or evening
- Work-out time each afternoon is from 4-6pm.

### Evenings:

- Sunday: Reading night
  - o Social Studies Classes
- Monday: Games night: chess, scrabble, cards, puzzles, kayak polo at the pool, ping pong, etc.
- Tuesdays & Thursdays – Social Studies/History class
- Wednesday: Testimony & Gratitude night
- Friday: Movie night/Music night
  - o Drumming @ fire circle, lessons, jam sessions, etc.
- Saturday:
  - o Out on the town night for music, contra dances, sports events, etc. , or,

- TV night & Video Games night -Wii Nintendo
- Evening class time for on-line courses or block courses may be substituted for any of the above.

Weekends:

Students are welcome to spend weekend time with family and friends (approved by parents) whenever the school is not out on an expedition.

Parents may pick students up Friday after course work has ended and students should be back by after dinner Sunday for evening discussion groups.

**Saturdays:** Link staff offer a variety of activities that students may choose from either at the Lodge or out on activities. Activities may include personal project time, adventure activities like climbing or boating, local events, study hall, service work, individual work, drivers ed., etc.

**Sundays:** sleep-in morning followed by Sunday School either in Buena Vista or conducted by Link staff if out on an overnight. Sunday afternoons are discretionary time for students to work on homework, personal projects, etc.

**Adventure Unlimited Ranches**

A/U is adjacent to Link along the school's south property line. Students are welcome to be on the Ranch property for organized events such as climbing night, or to work with their mentor on a project, and that sort of thing. However, the Ranch property is not open to students for unsupervised hang out space.

**HS Athletics**

Link students are eligible to play high school sports at the Buena Vista public High School. BVHS welcomes students from other programs to compete for spots and participate in their Varsity and Junior Varsity programs. Link students would need to work out both availability (due to our regular expedition schedule) and eligibility. Bobby can help students work with the local coaches and athletic director.

**Entrepreneurial Activities**

Student Work for \$ at Link:

Students have the opportunity to work at the school for income from time to time. Our hope is that students use this opportunity to develop both their work ethic and practical skills.

Entrepreneurial Opportunities: training and equipment provided by Link

- Firewood business with splitter and haul trailer
- Snow plowing with jeep and truck in neighboring subdivisions
- Tree Trimming
- Christmas Tree sales
- Handcrafts: felting, crocheting, quilting, knitting

Work Opportunities in the community:

- Hay bucking & hauling for local ranchers
- Catering and cooking for local caterer
- Computer and tech repairs for local hardware tech
- Retail sales
- Restaurant work
- Carpentry for local contractors

### **III. Individual Projects**

Under the guidance of a mentor each student works on an individual project two afternoons per week for the course of the school year. Ideally students should select a couple of projects that they can devote themselves to. Weather and seasons play a part in how often and when a student can engage in outdoor projects and having an indoor project as well is advisable.

Mentors are responsible for helping students develop knowledge, tangible skills, and accomplishments in the project area they have chosen. The Buena Vista area has rich potential due to so many young Christian Science adults who are living and working here.

**Projects might include:**

- musical instruments,
  - drums available
  - piano available
  - guitars available
- fine arts
  - sculpture
  - pottery
  - painting
  - sketching & drawing
  - illustrating
  - photography
  - mosaics
  - videography
- drama
- computer tech
- welding
- woodworking
- auto mechanics
- carpentry
- entrepreneur work
- cooking
- knitting
- hand crafts – felt needling etc.
- quilting
- architectural design
- reading
- poetry
- SAT/ACT prep
- sports
  - cross country skiing
  - skjoring
  - running – roads & trails
  - martial arts – karate, tai kwon do, etc
  - high school sports
  - ski/ snowboard
  - mountain biking
  - skateboarding
  - telemark ski
  - rock climbing
  - 14ers
  - fly-fishing
  - kayaking
  - sailing
  - rafting & guiding
  - dog sledding
  - horse riding and training
  - polocross
  - burro races
  - soccer

- dance
- forestry
- search and rescue
- wildland firefighting
- geology & prospecting
- current events & political activism
- drivers ed and training
- gardening
- community farming
- tracking
- hunting
- jeeping
- falconry
- Department of Wildlife survey and feeding projects service work
- humane society
- mentoring through Chaffee County Mentors

### **Equipment and Supplies**

Equipment and supplies for your projects are provided on loan by Link if possible. If a student wants to do a project where they keep the equipment (i.e. fly fishing rod and flies) then the student is responsible for purchasing their own equipment.

### **Senior Projects**

Please see the section in the Course Catalog titled Senior Seminar.

## **IV. Service Work**

Service begins within the school community with each student having daily chores and responsibilities with the animals, cooking, clean up, equipment care, and land stewardship. From there the service focus extends out into the broader community. Being needed, and understanding one's value as a contributing citizen, is a key to the Link program.

## **V. Spiritual Development**

The Link School is a family environment where Christian Science is studied and practiced. Each student is expected to join in Bible Lesson study, church and Sunday School, discussion groups, spiritual growth focused journaling, and working closely with a Practitioner from time to time as needed.

The program also includes daily breaks for prayer and contemplation as well as longer solo experiences on the wilderness expeditions.

Our hope is that students conclude their time at Link as motivated spiritual seekers, with a deep value for Christian Science, and a respect for all faiths and fellow seekers for truth.

# COMMUNITY

Daily school week schedule:

6:30	Wake Up
7:00	Breakfast (cook & dish crew rotation begins @ 7:20), headlines
7:30 – 7:50	Bible Lesson Study/Discussion
7:50 – 8:20	Chores & Staff Meeting
8:20 – 8:30	Check in
8:30 – Noon	Academic Course Work
Noon	Lunch
12:45 – 1:15	Siesta
1:15 – 4:30	Individually mentored projects or block courses
4:30 – 6:00	Chores, work out, and recreational time
6:30	Dinner
7:30 – 9:00	Reading time, evening classes, or discussion groups
10:15	Back to rooms – Curfew
11:00	Lights Out

## **Facility – site overview**

The Link School is housed in a leased facility along the north property line of the Adventure Unlimited Ranches. The setting is a new 8 bedroom, 9 bath, mountain lodge, with commercial kitchen, classroom with 270 degree mountain views and wood stove, great room for evening activities, game and work out spaces, and offices. Staff and students live together in the lodge with boys' and girls' rooms separated. Each student has a bed/bunk, chair, desk & lamp, dresser and closet for their use, as well as a gear storage locker in the garage.

Adjacent to the Lodge is the Garage with room for the vehicles, OutCamp, individual gear lockers, wood shop & tools, and games and work out space.

The facility was built utilizing both solar and wind power. You, as students of the second class, will have the opportunity to help with the construction by building the hay barn, the wind generator, and the greenhouse for the garden. The Basecamp is beautiful!



The Link School





## **Chores and Responsibilities**

Students and staff join together to care for all aspects of campus life including cooking, cleaning, animal chores, site work, vehicle service, snow plowing, etc. Come prepared to really make a significant contribution to the operation of the community. For most of you this is a significant change from being in an environment where much is provided for you.

Every day students participate in cleaning their individual spaces and the inside of the facility, taking care of the animals, and doing the outside chores required to care for the campus – snow removal, forestry, road maintenance, fencing, trail building, etc. Down time for students is contingent on the completion of chores and responsibilities.

Prior to school starting, we require a \$50 damage/cleaning deposit for each student for their room. When students depart Link for the summer, a clean and undamaged room is expected. Any work necessary on the part of the staff will result in the loss of the \$50 deposit.

## **Food Service**

Working with the staff, students plan for, prepare, and clean up from all meals. Credit for the work is given as Home Economics, but more importantly students graduate from Link knowing how to plan for meals, grow vegetables, utilize local food sources, cook, bake, and take responsibility for the sanitation of food preparation areas.

## **Equipment use**

### **Sports Equipment**

Balls, Frisbees, and basic sports gear are available to students. Please bring equipment that you would particularly like to have.

### **Boulder**

There is a rock climbing workout boulder for students to use.

### **Taut lines**

Taut lines (like low tight rope walking) are placed around the campus for students to workout on.

### **Trampoline**

There is a trampoline for students to use.

### **AV Equipment**

Equipment (like a digital projector) is available for student use with the Education Director's approval.

### **Tools**

Power tool safety instruction and certification is available for students who wish to work on projects requiring power tools.

### **Vehicles – cars, trucks, ATVs, heavy equipment, & trailers**

The Link School operates passenger vehicles, trucks, trailers, ATV's, and heavy equipment. Each vehicle has its own regulations & protocols regarding student use. For instance, students may be certified to drive the service vehicles, ATV's, etc, for chores and work, however, for safety and insurance reasons at no time are students allowed to drive other students in Link passenger vehicles.

### **TVs – video games**

There are TV's available for students to watch appropriate shows and movies during their down time and to play age appropriate video games on.

### **Computers**

Each student has a computer that they have brought or checked out from Link for their academic course work. The computer is also available for entertainment and personal correspondence in so far as the student is able to make sound choices in what sites they visit and how they correspond with others. This kind of self-discipline and discretion is required to make choices that strengthen ones well-being and is an imperative skill for students to develop and employ in preparation for life after the structure of school.

If a student is found using their computer inappropriately, it will result in restricted use of that computer.

### **Movies**

The school's policy is that all movies need to be age appropriate. This policy can be waived with both parental and staff approval.

### **Games**

"M" rated games, whether played on a computer or on a tv, are not approved. This policy can be waived with both parental and staff approval.

## **STUDENT INFORMATION**

Each of you as students are coming as unique individuals with distinct desires and expectations as to what Link is going to mean to you, but I believe the one unifying characteristic of Link School students is that each of you are looking for something more than what is available in a traditional education setting. At Link, the project and experience based academics, the expeditions, the service to the community, and the opportunities to explore spiritually weave together in a way where you unquestionably, radically deepen your sense of self and your sense of what you have to give as a person.

How much you get from your time at Link is directly proportional to how much you give to it. Come prepared to work, to give, and to discover, and you will leave truly satisfied with and blessed by the experience.

### **School Government**

#### **Democratic & Consensus Process**

Whenever possible, decisions at The Link School are made employing a democratic, consensus based process, which fully includes students and honors their input. It is our goal for Link students to feel that they are "doing" school rather than a sense that school is being "done to" them. Be prepared for the consensus process to take work. It is much easier for a community to be governed from above, but it is much more demanding and in turn rewarding, to self govern.

#### **Community Process & Group Meetings**

Successful communities communicate a lot. What's working well? What's not working well and how can we improve it? How are you doing today? What are you grateful for right now? Every day there is time to prepare for the day, address issues as they arise, and reflect on the day. Come prepared to be a communicating contributor. Doing this well requires a lot. But, doing this well also makes for a healthy community where you have a place at the table and a voice that matters – making Link a place where you love to be.

### **Conflict Resolution & Peer Review**

Students are selected to serve on a Peer/Staff Council for situations involving the student body, which may require conflict resolution, mediation, and/or disciplinary action.

### **3 P's - punctual, prepared, participating**

In each evolution of each day, from cooking to chores, classes to projects, students are responsible for the 3Ps – being punctual, prepared & participating. When a student is lacking in any or all of the 3Ps it shows a lack of respect for their own contribution and the flow of the community - which results in “dings.” Dings can add up in any given week to the assignment of extra weekend chores and duties.

### **Constructive Discipline**

When discipline is needed it is the intent of the staff and the community to administer constructive discipline and help students move in the direction that is needed, not just highlight the problem or issue. Disciplinary measures may include loss of privileges and/or additional duties.

### **Suspension, Expulsion, 2<sup>nd</sup> Chance**

In cases of student misconduct that involve violence, theft, sexual misconduct, substance abuse, or any other activity that breaks the law and/or the moral code of the community, a student may be suspended or expelled.

Students have the opportunity to appeal via letter for re-enrollment and may be readmitted if deemed appropriate by staff and peers.

Students who are expelled will lose their tuition for the year.

### **Dress & Appearance Code**

The dress & appearance code at Link is simply that students are expected to dress appropriately for each activity. This means that for classroom time jeans, t-shirts, and sweatshirts are totally appropriate, but for a nice dinner or an expedition they would not be.

Rather than outline in writing a specific code for each evolution or event it is our expectation that students learn what is appropriate for each activity, and make good choices with their attire and appearance such that they are dressed & decorated in a respectful and appropriate way for all their activities in and out of the classroom.

Our specific request is that all students make choices in dress that display modesty and respect for others. What that means specifically we can define together each year as styles change.

For piercings, tattoos, non-natural hair coloring, etc., students need both parental and Link School approval before getting anything new.

## **Off-Campus Freedoms**

Students have off-campus privileges from time to time for personal projects, on weekends and personal time. Destinations and activities need to be approved by parents and Link staff. Privileges increase according to student age, maturity, and responsibility, and those privileges can also be lost due to poor decision-making.

## **Sleeping Outside**

Students may sleep outside given the following stipulations:

- Girls sleep outside on their porches on odd numbered days
- Boys sleep outside on their porches on even numbered days
- On Friday and Saturday nights, boys and girls can request to both sleep outside on their respective porches providing there are staff available to also sleep outside.
- Sleeping bags must be put away each day – that means either spread neatly on one's bed, or stuffed in the stuff sack and put on one's bed.
- Cots may be checked out and used outside. They must remain neat and orderly.

## **Language**

Staff and students work together to ensure that language choices reflect our community principles and are both appropriate and respectful to the educational setting.

## **Drugs/Alcohol/Tobacco**

The Link School is a drug, alcohol and tobacco free environment. Students and staff are expected to abide by the laws of the state, the principles of the community, and moral code of our religious faith. It is our belief that making the choice to abstain from these substances is one that strengthens and blesses, and that substance use deteriorates one's sense of worth and wellbeing. Attendance at Link is contingent on students holding themselves accountable to making sound decisions in this regard.

Testing: if there is a question as to whether a student is abiding by the laws that prohibit underage alcohol consumption or drug use, The Link School reserves the right to conduct a drug/alcohol test, and inform the Sheriff of any violation of the law. Students will be held accountable to the law.

## **Sexuality**

It is our expectation that students make appropriate choices in their relationships while at The Link School regarding intimacy and sexuality. Students are free to be engaged in relationships with others, but the intimacy in those relationships should not include sex. The primary reasons for this are 1) that sex is illegal for minors as a protection to them

in regard to health and pregnancy, and 2) that sex outside of the shelter of marriage is something that can be deteriorative to one's sense of wellbeing and wholeness.

## **Pornography**

Students will discipline themselves, and be held accountable to abstinence from all forms of pornography. Students' web access history is reviewed by staff from time to time to support students in making good choices. Net filters are also employed at the school.

## **Music**

Students are welcome to bring, play and listen to the music that interests them. It is our expectation that students' musical choices reflect the principles of the community in terms of respect for oneself and others.

## **Accountability**

Student boundaries: Students are responsible for keeping the community informed of their whereabouts. The Link School is a flexible environment in terms of where students are working, studying and recreating, but it is a courtesy to keep others informed of one's location. There is a location board in the dining room for students to note where they are headed and their intended return time. (If a student is heading out of the lodge, but is within sight or voice of the lodge, then it is not necessary to use the location board. If the student is further away than that, then please use the board.) Also, students should take their cell phone when heading above property into the forest or off property for activities.

**Inside:** The dorm rooms are single gender. Males are not allowed in female's rooms (students or staff) or vice versa. After curfew, each floor becomes single-gender.

**Outside:** Students are welcome to be on Link School property or on the public lands to the west in the San Isabel National Forest. Private land to our north, east and south is not be accessed without landowner permission.

## **Parent/Family Communication and Inclusion Plan**

We want parents, family members and friends to be involved in your Link School experience. Our interest is not to isolate you as a student in any way. Our hope is that you will utilize the phone, email, web blogs, Skype w/ laptop cameras, visitation to campus, trips home, family expeditions, holidays, presentations of learning on 2 way and video blogs, service weekends, parent trainings, Facebook chat page, and other resources to really stay in touch with those you love.

Link staff write parents each week with updates on their student's activities, academics and progress.

## **Practitioner of the Month (POM)**

Each month The Link School contracts with a Journal listed practitioner for support for the organization, and to be available for students and staff to call for prayerful support for things related to school. For staff and students the first three days of work by a POM will be paid for by The Link School and after that practitioner billing will be the responsibility of the individual. In the case of students, The Link School will pay the practitioner directly, but will add the practitioner charges to the student's account.

## **Phone Use**

Link Students are required to have a cell phone for safety and communication during off-property, free-time, expeditions, travel, etc.. Verizon, Alltel, and ATT, among others, all have good mountain service, and the Link lodge has a cell phone booster. On a Friends and Family-type program students will be able to be in regular touch with parents, friends, and family members at home for limited expense.

## **Mail**

Mail is delivered to a mailbox on The Link School road and is picked up and delivered each day. FedEx and UPS deliver boxes and packages to the school. Both addresses are 18885 CR 367, Buena Vista, CO 81211.

## **Computer Use**

Students should either bring their own Apple laptop or rent one of The Link School's Apple laptops. A fee of \$200 is required to use a Link laptop. If you choose to purchase your student's computer at any point, the amount you've paid towards each year's use will be applied towards the purchase (please see the chart below for a list of the costs of computers). Any damage to the computer caused by student negligence will be paid for by the student.

All Link computers are restricted to the lodge, yurt and workout room only, and may not be taken home on breaks. Should a student be interested in purchasing their Link computer, please contact Natalie.

Computer Purchase Price – this is dependent upon the age of the computer, not when your student started using it.

Brand new computer through May of its first year	purchase price minus \$100
One+ years old through May of its second year	last year minus \$200
Two+ years old through May of its third year	last year minus \$200
Three+ years old through May of its fourth year	last year minus \$200

## **Music During Academic Time**

When music is permitted during academic time, here are some stipulations:

- You may not use any on-line music websites or through a program that is streaming music. Due to the wide variety of apps and venues for listening to music, if you are not using iTunes, please have your music app approved by one of the staff so that we can together know that it is not streaming. Our internet bandwidth is extremely limited, and streaming of this kind greatly curtails it – hampering academic as well as professional work being done.
- Music must be from a pre-established play-list and not altered during class time.
- Math class – music may be listened to if a student has a 70% or better grade point in this class. Music must be conducive to learning.
- Students should listen with only one headphone so as to be able to hear people trying to get their attention.

## **Doing Academic Work at a Table**

In an effort to support strong academic work, only students with a greater than a 2.5 GPA can work somewhere other than a table during class time and study hall time.

## **Computer Monitoring**

- Apple Remote Desktop: The Link School uses Apple Remote Desktop to monitor student computer use. There are restrictions as indicated:
  - The Administrator version of this software is loaded only on an extra computer called the Admin Computer.
  - Monitoring student computer use happens only during academic time. Study hall is part of academic time.
  - All student computers are enabled with the icon that indicates when they are being monitored.
  - If a student comes to any academic time and the settings have been changed on the student’s computer making Apple Remote Desktop unable to see the student’s computer, then the student will receive a “circle ding.”
- Circle Dings:
  - If a student is using their computer inappropriately, then the student will receive a circle ding. Two circle dings result in restriction of computer use to only academics, and the computer is restricted to the office during all non-academic times for 7 full days.
  - Inappropriate computer use includes having programs open during academic time that send any kind of alerts. This includes Facebook and Skype as they alert the member that they’ve received a message. Anything of this type needs to be quit out of, not just running in the background.

In addition, The Link School has an internet filter installed to prevent anyone using our network from going on inappropriate sites.

## **Visitation & Guest Facilities**

Students are welcome to have parents, other family members and friends visit them throughout the school year. There is a guest room available on the property with a

queen bed and bath. For overnights, recommended donations are \$30 for adults and \$15 for children. Maximum room donation is \$50. Reservations can be made with Natalie. Length of stay is recommended to be 3 nights or less so that the rooms can rotate to others wanting to visit.

For other housing options, please visit our web site at [www.TheLinkSchool.org](http://www.TheLinkSchool.org) and go to the About Us section under Location.

Meals are \$12/day, \$4/meal.

Parents and visitors are welcome to participate in the school events and activities insofar as it does not interrupt the flow of instruction and education. Visits can be coordinated with Bobby.

## **Family Expeditions**

Every year we offer an expedition and a service weekend where students are welcome to invite a parent or family member(s) to come out and participate with us. \

## **Firearms & Weapons**

As a general rule, weapons are not to be brought to or stored at The Link School.

### **Exceptions**

- Knives for expeditions and projects are okay but they should be short bladed and ideally multi-tool in nature. Knife safety and respect for others comfort are a must.
- For hunting or target practice, students and staff may seek approval to have a bow or rifle. All weapons are stored by Bobby in a safe and can be checked out and used only with approval and supervision.
- Paint ball and Airsoft guns may be considered for approval by the staff but a final consideration has not yet been made. (what about this?)

## **Airsoft/Paintball Guns**

Airsoft and paintball guns are hard at first glance to distinguish from their counterparts that fire live rounds. It is highly important to all in the Link community that there is a genuine sense of safety for those at the school, and having mock guns that can be mistaken for real weapons is not fitting with that goal. Also airsoft/paintball guns encourage combative games and first person shooter entertainment, which is contrary to the way we want to see each other and interact with each other here. Please do not bring them to Link.

## **Pets**

Students are not able to have pets due to space limitations in part, but primarily due to the expedition schedule. Even fish need food more than once a week!

## **Laundry**

Laundry facilities are available for students to use at The Link School. We also provide laundry soap for student use.

## **Student ID**

Please send your student to school with a government issued ID in addition to your student's passport. This can either be a driver's license, or your state's identification card available to students who do not yet have a license.

## **Cash, CC, and Banking**

Students are required to manage their personal funds. Natalie is available to assist with this.. Depending upon parent preference and the demonstration of sound decision making, cash, credit cards and checks may be held in the office and available to students upon request and approval.

Parents are encouraged to provide their students with some sort of allowance. We recommend a monthly amount of around \$80 for incidentals – movies out, clothing, shampoo, occasional meals out, etc.

## **Who pays for what with projects, off time, meals out, etc.**

When on personal time out or while participating in discretionary activities students are responsible for their own food and activity expenses. For example, if a student chooses to go skiing on a Saturday with a group of friends, the ski rental, ticket, and food is their expense.

For all-student group activities, expenses relative to projects and activities are assessed and when possible covered by Link. For example, if Link is taking students skiing for a Friday afternoon all-school activity, tickets are provided by Link and food is covered. However, if equipment is needed that the student plans to keep, the expense is the student's or family's. While on projects, activities, and expeditions, students have an allowance per meal - the student covers food expenditures beyond the Link allowance.

## **School Supplies**

Books for course work are either available through the Link library for check out or need to be purchased by the student. Students should budget \$100-\$200 per year for book purchases.

## **Bible Lessons**

Each student is expected to have either a set of books that they can mark each week along with a subscription to the Quarterly, and/or a subscription to the Full Text, and/or

a subscription to the MyBible Lesson. If you have a subscription to the MyBible Lesson, and would like to have Link print them out for you each week, then please plan on paying \$10 to cover paper and ink costs. Please note, this can only be done if the student already has a subscription. Link wants to respect copyright laws.

## **Personal Property Insurance**

While at Link, each student's personal property needs to be insured by the student's family. If the family carries homeowners insurance, it is common that personal property away from the home is covered automatically. If the family doesn't own a home, then renter's insurance can cover personal property away from the home, but each family should check with their insurance agent for the details regarding their own insurance.

## **Health Care Procedures**

In a case of illness or injury to a student, spiritual treatment will be given immediately, nursing care given as needed, and parents will be contacted to give guidance to the staff regarding the student's care - until the parent/guardians are reached, assistance will be rendered according to the Director's best judgment.

Current Colorado law mandates that medical care be afforded to all youth in the case of life threatening injury or illness.

The student's application serves as the "Permission to Treat" form in Colorado.

## **Link School Health Form**

We are required as an accredited, experiential education organization to have on file documented medical histories for our students. A form will be provided for you to fill out.

## **Medications**

If a student is taking medication for any purpose, please inform Bobby and discuss the details of the situation with him. Our expectation at Link is that students who are taking medication are working towards spiritual healing and a freedom from that need.

## **Health Insurance**

Students coming to The Link School should be covered by their family's health insurance plan, and a copy of this plan should be provided to The Link School. The Link School does not provide health insurance to students.

## **Immunizations**

Colorado law requires students to be immunized; however there is a religious accommodation form for students whose religious beliefs conflict with this requirement.

## **Emergencies**

In the case of any emergency involving students or The Link School (i.e. lost student, fire, etc.), parents will be notified and involved in decision making as soon as possible. The Link School staff carry both cell and satellite phones in the field on expeditions to aid in the resolution of emergency situations and to be able to call for care from a Christian Science Practitioner or other appropriate help as needed.

## **Inverted Tricks**

Inverted tricks (flips) on skis, bikes, boards, slacklines, trampoline, etc., need parental permission, staff permission, and appropriate training and safety measures.

## **Fire & Facility Evacuation**

Fire is a significant concern in our dry mountain climate. Students are responsible for being fire safe at all times and are taught what to do in the case of either a facility fire or a wildfire. The Link School site has an internal fire suppression system with a 5,000-gallon reservoir, and we are under the care of the Chaffee County Fire Fighting District.

## **Vehicle Safety and Protocols**

Students travel in Link School 9 passenger 4wd Yukons and/or Link School 4wd trucks with trained drivers. If on occasion a student is to ride in a staff member's personal vehicle or any other vehicle, prior approval from parents will be established.

## **Seat Belts**

It is the responsibility of the students to be wearing seat belts at all times when traveling in a vehicle for school purposes. If, after the car is moving, a student does not have their seat belt on, they may be asked to get out of the car and will not receive transportation to wherever we are going. Options on what to do will be discussed at that time.

## **Student Vehicles and Driving Protocols**

Students who are in their senior year and have a valid drivers' license, may, with parental and Link approval, have a car on campus. Some students may receive driving privileges for work projects prior to their senior year on a case-by-case basis.

## **Protocols For Unsupervised Activities**

First, any staff member can approve a requested activity that is within the scope of our regular, planned, supervised program activities. It is then the responsibility of that staff member to inform the other staff who are on so they know that a student is off property and when they are returning, etc.

Secondly, if a student(s) requests any activity that is outside the scope of our regular

program, and that includes all unsupervised activities, please run that by Bobby first, or Natalie if Bobby's not reachable, for consideration.

Third, if the activity is one that we are inclined to approve, then the student needs to get parental approval in writing (email) which states the parent understands that the requested activity is an unstaffed, non-Link activity – i.e. "It's fine for Billy to be in Buena Vista tonight with his friends hanging out until curfew. I understand that this is not a Link School activity and that it will not be staffed or supervised."

### **Miscellaneous charge & deposit summary**

Each of these charges or deposits is discussed above:

Room	\$50 cleaning/repair deposit
Expedition Gear	\$100 repair deposit
Sleeping Bag and/or backpack	\$100 repair deposit
Computer	\$200 fee
Printing of MyBible Lesson	\$10 payment

# GEAR & CLOTHING MASTER LIST

## Clothing:

- 3-4 Cotton pants — jeans or other pants
- 1-2 Belts
- 2-3 Shorts — at least one pair should be quick-drying or synthetic
- 1-2 Swimsuits — quick-drying synthetic. (For girls: one piece or if a 2-piece: board shorts or swimsuit shorts and a jog bra/athletic-type or tankini top are acceptable, but no bikini bottoms and no string bikini/bra-type tops.)
- 4-6 Cotton T-shirts\*
- 3-4 Long sleeve shirts— cotton okay
- Nice outfit(s) for church and formal dinners, etc.
  - 2-3 Skirts and/or dresses for girls (kilts and lungees are fine for daring boys)
  - 2 Pants (khakis, cords)
  - 1-2 Nice shirts – button down
- 1-2 Sweatshirts
- 1-2 Sweatpants (cotton/poly blend better than all cotton)
- 1 Fleece Vest
- 1-2 Lightweight jackets
- 1-2 Fleece or wool sweaters
- 1 Warm winter jacket with fleece or synthetic lining and nylon/gortex outer
- 2 Long underwear top & bottom - light or medium-weight thermal. Polyester/Capilene/Thermax/silk or similar NOT COTTON
- 1-2 non-cotton, short sleeved tops
- 6-8 Underwear – with a few of those non cotton synthetic
- 4 Cotton socks (pair)
- 4-6 Warm socks (pair) — wool or poly blend (no cotton) Smartwool is a good brand
- 2 Lightweight non cotton liner socks
- 1 Pajamas (pair)
- 1 Bathrobe
- 1 Rain jacket/technical shell — waterproof and breathable, (i.e. gortex or similar fabric)
- 1 Poncho of Army/Navy surplus quality with grommets on corners
- 1 Rain & wind pants — waterproof and breathable, (i.e. gortex or similar fabric)
- 1-2 Baseball style caps — to keep sun off the face
- 2 Warm hats — wool, synthetic or fleece
- 1 Neck gaiter or scarf
- 4 Pairs of gloves or mittens
  - 1 Lightweight synthetic quick dry liners
  - 1 Wool or fleece medium weight
  - 1 Waterproof shells with insulation

- 1 Leather work gloves

### **Footwear:**

- 1 Athletic shoes
- 1 Running shoes
- 1 Hiking boots – light weight synthetic okay if they are waterproof
- 1 Snow boots – Sorrels are a good brand
- 1 Slippers, clogs
- 1 River sandals or water shoes — Teva, Chaco brand sandals or water shoes
- 1 Nice shoes for church, dinners, etc.
- 1 Horseback riding boots – optional

### **Personal Items:**

- 1 Bible and Science & Health
- 1 Markers for books, or full text subscription, or My Bible Lesson
- 1 Journal
- 1 Toiletry Kit — toothbrush, toothpaste, comb or brush, deodorant, shampoo, nail clippers, q tips, floss, etc.
- 1 Lip Balm\* — minimum SPF 10 sun protection
- 1 Sunscreen — minimum SPF 15 sun protection
- 1 Hand/Body Lotion
- 1 Laundry bag
- 1 Digital Camera & Card — with at least 512MB of memory
- Pens and Pencils
- 1 Apple laptop computer – with Microsoft Office installed (available for a fee from Link if you'd prefer)
- 1 Cell Phone – land line available from Link if student does not have phone
- 1 Wrist watch with alarm – especially needed for expeditions
- 1 Alarm clock for dorm room
- Room decorations – posters, wall hangings, etc. (plasti tak or thumb tacks are ok)
- Student Handbook
- 1 Duffle (soft sided) with wheels or shoulder straps - for international trip

### **Expedition Gear:**

- 1 Daypack – suitable for backcountry use
- 1 Hydration system – camel back, etc. This piece of gear can be a combination with the daypack or a separate piece (optional as long as student has water bottles instead). If you choose to bring this piece of gear, please also bring at least one 32oz water bottle. Hydration systems are more leak prone than water bottles, and if they have a hole, they are useless.
- 2 Water Bottles\* — 32 ounce with screw top lid

- 1 Backpack – internal frame 3800-5000 cu inches (available to borrow from Link)
- 1 pr hiking pants (non-cotton)
- 1 Headlamp
- 2 Bandanas
- 1 Gaiters (optional)
- 1 Sunglasses— with keeper strap
- 1 Sleeping Bag — down or synthetic - rated warm to 10-20 degrees (available to borrow from Link)
- 1 Sleeping pad – we recommend that you purchase a Therm-a-rest backpacking pad. We have ensolite pads available for loan, but they are not nearly as warm or comfortable.
- 1 Paddle Jacket or Dry Top — Stohlquist, Patagonia, etc. (also available to borrow from Link)
- 1 Pair Neoprene sock/booties — water sandals aren't appropriate for kayakers (also available to borrow from Link)
- 1 Pair padded biking shorts – optional but highly recommended
- 1 Camping Chair — portable (Crazy Creek - optional)
- 1 Pocket Knife or multi tool —max blade length = 3"
- 2-3 stuff sacks - between 3 and 7 liters in volume - no need for them to be compression sacks.

### **Recreational Gear and Equipment – (all optional):**

- Musical Instruments
- Binoculars
- Kayak, Paddle, PFD, & Spray deck
- Mountain bike and riding gear
- Road bike and gear
- Bike helmet
- Tack for horseback riding
- Skis/Snowboard, helmet and gear
- Trekking pole(s)
- Ice axe
- Skateboard — (helmet required)
- Rock climbing shoes & harness
- Soccer cleats
- iPod
- Radio/stereo
- GPS

### **School Supplies:**

- 1 Backpack to carry your books and school supplies with you
- 1 dz Pencils (mechanical is fine, but remember to buy extra lead and erasers for them)
- 1 dz Pens

- 3 Highlighters – 1 each, 3 different colors
- 2 Glue stick
- 3 3x5 cards – 50 pk
- 1 package of erasers (the hand-held kind)
- 1 pad graph paper
- 1 pkg of 250 8.5x11 college rule lined paper
- 3 1.5” 3-ring binders
- 3 sets 3 dividers for binder
- 2 writing journals: one for personal use, one for class
- 1 ruler
- 1 protractor
- 1 small package multicolor construction paper
- 1 calculator –
- 1 Any other supplies you’d like for personal use: pen holder; paper tray; sticky notes, etc.

### **Bedding/Bath:**

Link will provide the following items, however you are welcome to bring your own things if you’d like.

- 1 Pillow
- 1 Down comforter
- 1 Fitted bottom sheet
- 1 Duvet (which is a comforter cover that serves as a top sheet and makes making your bed very easy)
- 1 Pillowcase
- bath mat
- 

You will need to bring:

- 2 washcloths
- 2-3 towels

If you would prefer to sleep with a blanket, then please bring your own blanket and top sheet.

### **Suggested Mail & Web-order Companies**

REI-(800) 562-4894 — [www.rei.com](http://www.rei.com)

EMS-(888) 463-6367 — [www.emsonline.com](http://www.emsonline.com)

Patagonia-(800) 638-6464 — [www.patagonia.com](http://www.patagonia.com)

The North Face-(800) 719-NORTH — [www.thenorthface.com](http://www.thenorthface.com)

Campmor-(800) 526-4784 — [www.campmor.com](http://www.campmor.com)

LL Bean-(800) 341-4341 — [www.llbean.com](http://www.llbean.com)

Mountain Hardware-(510) 559-6700 — [www.mountainhardware.com](http://www.mountainhardware.com)

Northwest River Supplies-(800) 635-5202 — [www.nrsweb.com](http://www.nrsweb.com)

Colorado Kayak Supply-(888) 265-2925 — [www.coloradokayak.com](http://www.coloradokayak.com)

Osprey Packs (866) 284-7830 — [www.ospreypacks.com](http://www.ospreypacks.com)

\* Consignment and Surplus stores often have very economical and quality gear.

**Expedition Gear** for check out from Link: sleeping bags, pads, backpacks, tarps/tents, cooking gear, and all the things needed for mountain travel like boats, bikes, ice axes, x-country skis, snowshoes, etc.

## **FITNESS**

### **Please take particular note of this:**

Both the expeditions and the daily activity schedule require a sound level of personal fitness.

Upon arrival students need, at a minimum, to be able to:

- run 2 miles in 30 minutes or less at 9,000 feet of altitude
- row 3000 meters on a ergometer in under 15 minutes
- bike 10 miles in under 1 hr.
- do 10 or more push ups
- 30 or more sit ups
- and 2 or more pull ups or 20 seconds of bent arm hanging

These are basic standards and if the requirement is easy for you then challenge yourself with more.

The key to being fit is finding a daily routine that you can stick to. I run 20-30 minutes a day and do 20-30 minutes of calisthenics. It's not a lot, but I can stick to it, and then some days I do more.

### **Suggestions for preparing yourself are:**

#### **Endurance:**

- Running: if you run 15-30 minutes regularly (3-4 times a week) you'll have a good fitness foundation
- Biking: bike 30-60 minutes a couple of times a week
- Swim: lap swimming is excellent foundation work (20-30 minutes per session)
- Jump Rope: good endurance work
- Aerobics: both classes and tapes can be effective
- Hiking/Backpacking/Peak climbing are all excellent for endurance

#### **Strength:**

- Calisthenics: pull-up, push-up, sit-up exercises are simple, free, and effective.
- Gym/Weight work outs can build good strength
- Rowing Machines: (or actually rowing!) is unbeatable

- Summer sports like kayaking, rock climbing, wind surfing, etc., can be good strength builders.

**\* You will need to work out for 30-60 minutes at least 5 days a week to be ready for the demands of the Link program. Come fit, not expecting to get fit.**

## **SPIRITUAL PREPARATION**

“Bodily exercise profiteth little...” says the Bible, so why include the previous section on fitness? Because physical fitness work is truly about teaching yourself more about who you are spiritually and nothing more. Fitness is not about training the body, but rather, it is about training consciousness in regard to your true identity and capacity. Science and Health says to “work out the spiritual, which determines the outward and actual.”

Coming to Link this fall spiritually prepared is the most valuable preparation work that you can possibly do. Link is about deepening your connection with the Divine. Be doing that work now. Come ready to delve deeper.

### **Some suggestions:**

- Bible Lesson Study: The Christian Science Bible Lesson gives you a remarkable way to learn, confirm, and demonstrate who you really are. It is a treatment for wholeness. Read a section, or two, or six every day and listen to what it is telling you about who you are. Don't tell yourself you are too busy. When are you really ever too busy to learn more about your identity, value, and purpose?
- Prayer & Reflection: This is THE way to hear what God is telling you. Take time from all the activities, friends, entertainment, sleep, and all that stuff each day to simply listen. Take one thought from the Lesson or memory that you love and think on just that one thought until your mind is still and you can hear what God is telling you about who you are. Be still...for a minute, 10 minutes, an hour if you can, and the things you hear coming into thought will strengthen you for your time at Link. If it's hard to sit still then go on a walk by yourself or a run, but consciously use that time to listen.
- Journaling is a very valuable way to develop insight and understanding. Keep a journal this summer and ask regularly the question “God who are you asking me to be today and how can I be that person?” Write your own personal code about who you are as a person and keep revising it as new ideas come to thought and new experiences teach you more about who you are.

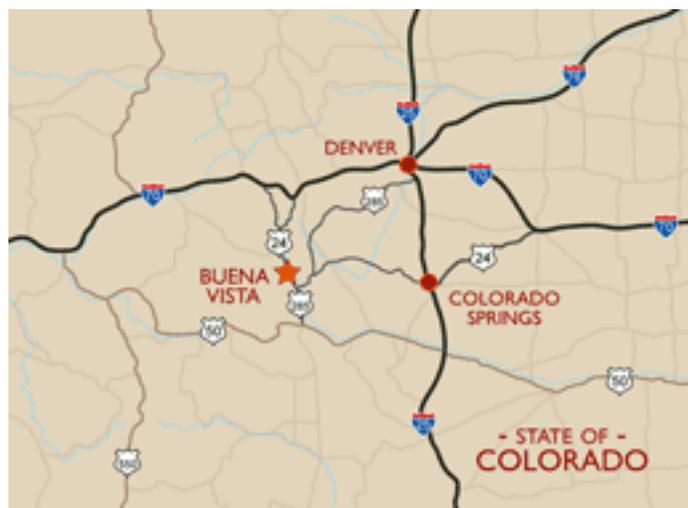
**\* Work on finding that “indissoluble spiritual link which establishes you in the Divine likeness” now, and come to Link ready to deepen that process of discovery.**

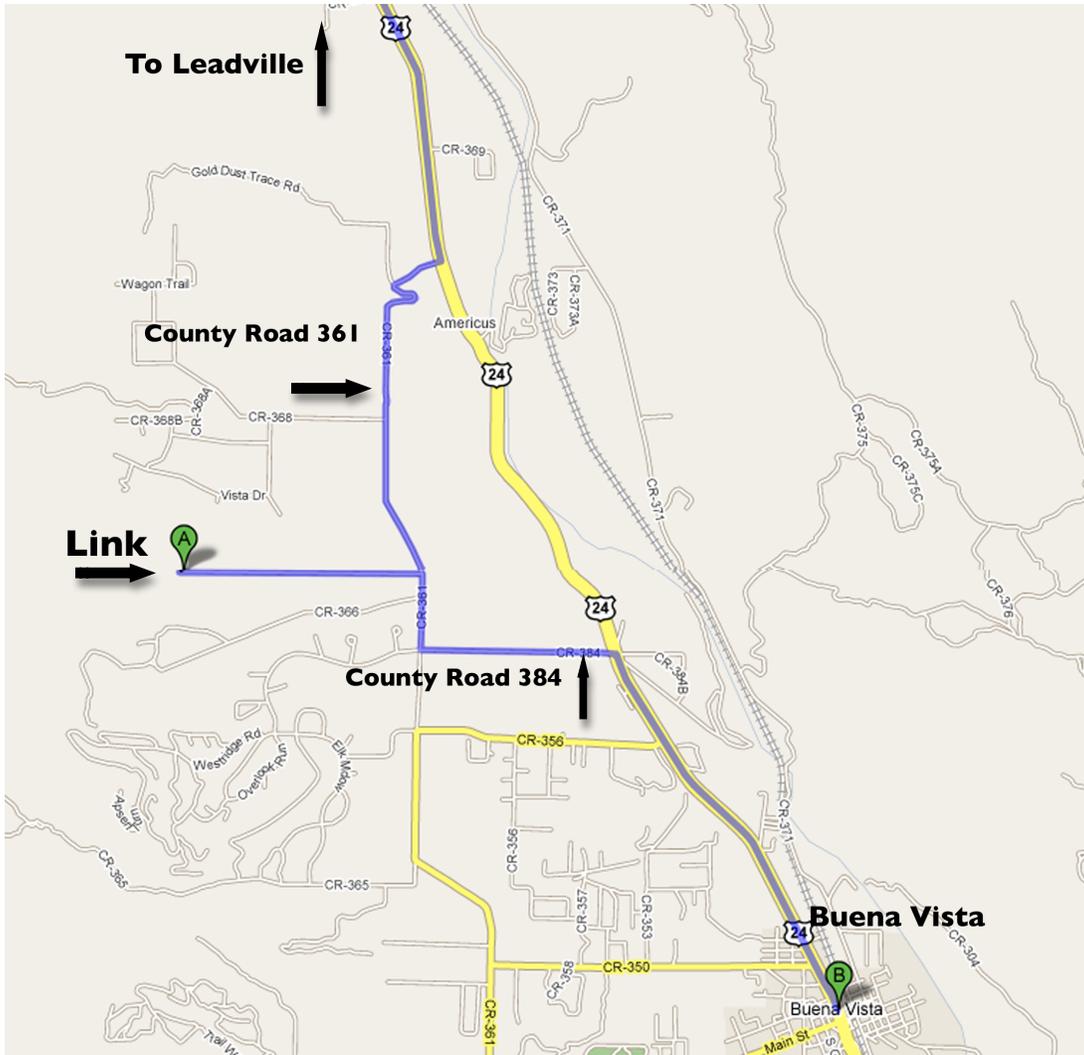
## READING IDEAS FOR SUMMER

The following are books that we think you might really enjoy this summer. This is not an assignment, but just some suggestions.

The Tracker, by Tom Brown  
Watch for Me on the Mountain, by Forest Carter  
Peace Like a River, by Leif Enger  
Cold Mountain, by Charles Frazier  
Dune, by Frank Herbert  
Seabiscuit, by Laura Hillenbrand  
The Kite Runner, by Khaled Hosseini  
The Secret Life of Bees, by Sue Monk Kidd  
Into Thin Air, by John Krakauer  
The Lonesome Gods, by Louis L'Amour  
A River Runs Through It, & Young Men and Fire, by Norman Maclean  
Life of Pi, by Yann Martel  
Lonesome Dove, by Larry McMurtry  
Centennial, by James Michener  
The Long Walk, by Slavomir Rawicz  
The Joy Luck Club, by Amy Tan  
The Glass Castle, by Jeanette Wall

## LOCATION MAP





# SCHOOL CONTACT INFO

The Link School  
18885 CR 367  
Buena Vista, CO 81211

Phone – 719-395-6797  
Fax – 719-395-6797

# APPENDIX

## Y6 2013/14 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Aug 31	Arrival day – returning students
Sept 2	Arrival day – new students
Sept 3	Semester 1 begins
Sept 5-10	Field Program: Mtn. Eco - backpacking, peak climb, San Isabel, CO
Sept 14	School on Saturday
Sept 16	Chicken Processing
Sept 20-21	Service: Construction - ATV Shed & Garage Doors
Sept 21	BV Color Run
Sept 24-25	NWEA
Sept 27-29	Field Program: Horse trip, peak climb, and service at LWH
Oct 5-12	Field Program: Desolation Canyon, Green River, UT
Oct 16	PSAT
Nov 1-5	Field Program: Mountain Bike & Climb, Fruita CO
Nov 27-Dec 1	Thanksgiving: Students' Families invited to Link
Dec 3	SAT
Dec 20	End of Semester 1
Dec 21-Jan 4	Christmas Break
Jan 5	Return to Link from Christmas Break
Jan 6-8	POLs & Peru Trip Prep
Jan 9 – Feb 1	International Field Program - Peru
Feb 3	Semester 2 begins
Feb 14-16	Cultural Weekend - Denver, CO
Feb 21-23	Field Program: Lost Wonder Hut – Mtn. Eco & backcountry winter skills
March 8	SAT
March 8-14	Field Program: Canyoneering, The Gulch, Utah
March 15-23	Spring Break
April 12-18	Field Program: Canoe, Stillwater Canyon, Green River, UT
April 20	Race: Pole, Pedal, Paddle
May 3-21	Senior Project window
May 6-7	NWEA
May 22-27	Field Program: Alpine Mountaineering, Sangre's CO
May 28-30	POLs
May 31	Graduation
June 1	Departure Day

## **Travel Dates and Information – 2013/14:**

**Arrivals** – If you are flying, please plan on arriving into the Denver airport before 2 p.m. on arrival days. Earlier arrivals are ok, but we will come to pick up students from the airport just after 2 p.m. (Please call me prior to booking flights if you need to make flight arrangements outside of this schedule.) If you are driving to Link, please plan on arriving between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Arrival days are:

- Monday, August 19<sup>th</sup> – staff begin work
- Saturday, August 31<sup>st</sup> – returning student arrival
- Monday, September 2<sup>nd</sup> – new student arrival
- Saturday, January 4<sup>th</sup> – staff return from Christmas Break
- Sunday, January 5<sup>th</sup> – student return from Christmas Break
- Saturday, March 22<sup>nd</sup> – staff return from Spring Break
- Sunday, March 23<sup>rd</sup> – students return from Spring Break

**Departures** – please schedule flights out of Denver after 11:30 a.m. on departure days. Later departures are ok, but we will arrive at the airport to drop all students off for flights leaving at 11 a.m. Drive away students, please plan on departing Link between 8 a.m. and 10 a.m.

Departure days are:

- Saturday, December 21<sup>st</sup> – staff and students depart for Christmas Break
- Saturday, March 15<sup>th</sup> – students depart for Spring Break
- Sunday, March 16<sup>th</sup> – staff depart for Spring Break
- Sunday, June 1<sup>st</sup> – student departure at end of school
- Saturday, June 7<sup>th</sup> – staff departure after school year wrap-up with application of comp days (staff paid through 6/15)

**Airport Shuttles:** Link will provide transportation for students arriving during the times listed above. Students arriving or departing on other schedules, shuttles can be arranged through Colorado Mountain Express (CME). The phone for CME is 800-525-6363, and email is [www.ridecme.com](http://www.ridecme.com). You'll want to schedule pick up or drop off at the Frisco Transfer Center.

There is also a bus service between Buena Vista and DIA via Denver. It requires a change of busses in Denver, runs once a day, and costs approximately \$100. Call Natalie for more details if you are interested (719-395-6797).

If using The Link School shuttle, students are met at the Denver Airport in the main concourse, at the far northwest corner of the top floor – which is the departures floor.

## **The 2013/2014 Project Based Learning theme:**

“How can we support each other in making radical progress?.”

# STAFF CONTACT INFO

- Bobby Lewis – Link Director, cell: 719-395-7704,  
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- Natalie Lewis – School Administrator, cell: 719-395-7411,  
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- Dave Bailey – Education Director, cell: 505-699-7197,  
email: Dave@TheLinkSchool.org
- Christine Love Bailey – English Instructor, cell: 314-412-5611,  
email: Christine@TheLinkSchool.org
- Bill Fabian – Social Studies/History Instructor, cell: 719-239-1617,  
email: marshallpoint@hotmail.com
- Preston Larimer – Science Instructor, 719-221-9397  
email: preston.larimer@gmail.com
- Bryan Reed – Instructor, Resident Counselor, cell: 360-461-0007,  
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- Erin Easton - Spanish Instructor, cell: 719-313-8831,  
email: erinkeaston@gmail.com
- Makenzie Barron – Instructor, Resident Counselor, cell: 618-363-1391,  
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- Ben Sleeman - Resident Advisor - Fall, cell: 719-293-1783,  
email: Ben@TheLinkSchool.org
- Jess Lewis - Resident Advisor - Spring, cell: 719-395-5546  
email: Jess@TheLinkSchool.org