

Dear Belmont Charter Network Community:

The leadership of Belmont Charter Network believes that as a community school organization, we must continually evolve to meet the community's needs. It has been our founding approach, and it guides our work to this day. We know that the current effort to combat racial injustice throughout our society and the work to keep educating our students in the face of a global pandemic means that our community is looking to us as a resource, now more than ever.

Rather than tell the community what is needed, we want to empower our network to voice their concerns, needs and ideas. We have been listening to the staff, students, families and Philadelphia so that we can develop informed and thoughtful responses and plans. We seek and value your input to help us guide our efforts.

Thank you for participating in our first virtual forum about the needs of our Belmont Network families in mid-June. We will continue these discussions so that we stay grounded in the pulse of our community. Moving forward, we recognize that there will be a need for a whole-organization approach to this work, and we are fully committed to that effort.

We know that our approach to this work must be intentional and organized. For example, we are planning mandatory staff trainings and working through our curriculum to weed through the institutional racism that permeates education systems. We know that our effort must include spaces within the organization to push this work forward in ways that meaningfully impact the day to day lives of our staff, our students and community we serve.

We believe that anti-racism must be at the heart of all the work we do at Belmont Charter Network. In fact, Belmont was founded to help address the systemic poverty and inequity in our education systems that for too long have not adequately invested in communities of color. While the pursuit of equity and social justice has always been our belief, we recognize that now is a time to ensure we are collectively pushing that conversation forward with concrete actions that match our beliefs- and to communicate with our community about how we will do that.

Thank you for working with us toward a brighter future.