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VIDEO: TORONTO RAPTORS PRESIDENT SPEAKS WITH BRONX CHARTER SCHOOL STUDENTS DURING COVID-19 REMOTE LEARNING SERIES

*During COVID-19 Remote Learning Series, NBA Executive Masai Ujiri Reminds Bronx Students to
Focus on Discipline and Character Building.*

(THE BRONX) – Classical Charter Schools, one of New York City’s highest performing public charter school networks with four schools in the South Bronx, hosted Masai Ujiri, President of the reigning NBA Champion Toronto Raptors as part of a remote learning series featuring prominent figures in sports, politics, media, and more. Ujiri is the first NBA general manager from Africa. An executive and former player, Ujiri spoke to Classical’s fourth grade class of 45 students about character building, teamwork and the importance of discipline. As a pioneer in his field, he is known for fearless, forward-thinking moves and blockbuster trades, including a 12-player trade that sent Carmelo Anthony to the New York Knicks during his tenure as vice president of basketball operations for the Denver Nuggets. The full session can be viewed [here](#).

“As we come together during this difficult time, our priority remains focused on incorporating educational enrichment opportunities and service to our scholars and the wider Bronx community. We are honored to have NBA Executive Masai Ujiri teach our scholars the importance of developing good character and leadership skills,” said Lester Long, Executive Director of Charter Schools. “We are continuing to provide students with opportunities to speak with inspiring sports professionals. Through every speaker session our scholars continue to be cultivated by real life anecdotes from prominent members of society.”

As part of the lesson Ujiri emphasized for Bronx students:

- **CHARACTER BUILDING:** During the conversation, Ujiri praised a student who attends all of his classes in his school uniform despite studying from home. “That’s discipline right there. That’s consistency. That’s character building right there. That’s going to take you so many places in your life. You have no idea.”
- **TEAMWORK:** Ujiri credits his time playing sports with teaching him the most valuable life lesson -- collaboration. “When you work with people, sometimes you have to understand people’s characters. Just like you have in your class, we’re not all going to be the same. We’re not all going to have the same backgrounds. We’re not all going to be the same color. We’re not all going to have the same likes. But at the end, we’re all going to have to find a way to work together and it starts with our hearts.”

The winner of two national Blue Ribbon Awards, Classical Charter Schools have been able to transition seamlessly through remote learning. Classical Charter Schools has four schools across the Bronx, serving over 1,000 kids in grades K-8. Today, it is the highest performing non-CMO charter network in all of New York City. Ninety-seven percent of students pass state math exams, and 91 percent pass the ELA test. As a whole, Classical Charter Schools outperform 97 percent of public schools in New York City, and over 90 percent of schools in New York State.

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