



The Ethical Community Charter School

95 Broadway • Jersey City, NJ 07306
201-984-4156 • www.teccsjc.org

EDUCATE

Our Mission

THE ETHICAL COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL (TECCS) is a safe and caring community where **ethics, service, and social justice** are the principles that inform every aspect of school life; where teachers lead and collaborate with students in a culture of rigorous academics and mutual respect; where analytical thinking and creativity are prized over rote learning; where children become individuals of integrity, insight, autonomy—and socially productive citizens, workers, and leaders.

Our School

TECCS OPENED IN SEPTEMBER 2009 after hard work by many in the community. It is a **free, public school** with its own charter, reporting to the State of New Jersey. In its first year, the school opened with kindergarten and first grade classes, and each year the school will add a new grade, growing along with our children. In September 2010, 40 new kindergarten students will be welcomed, with our current students moving up to grades one and two. The school is housed in a school building built in 1954 in the Marion section of Jersey City, near Journal Square. It has a spacious gym, completely outfitted cafeteria, separate rooms for music and art, and colorful classrooms. Each class of 20 students is led by a state licensed teacher and a qualified assistant. Application to the school is decided by lottery in January with preference going to residents of Jersey City.



©kennethchenportraits.com

Our Curriculum

AT TECCS, STUDENTS ARE VIEWED AS INDIVIDUALS and are expected to be active participants in their education. Teachers use many methods but emphasize an inquiry-based approach, in which **students are encouraged to explore, experiment, and ask questions.** Working in small groups, with excellent student-teacher ratios, students enjoy learning at their own pace. There is an explicit emphasis on promoting positive social development and increasing positive behavior in children. But it is the ethics-based education that sets TECCS apart from other schools. Ethics is infused into every aspect of the curriculum, inviting students to consider carefully what it means to be responsible, thoughtful members of a community.

The curriculum for each grade is based on interdisciplinary thematic units, all of which have language arts at their center. Major thematic units for 2009-2010 include:

- **All About Me.** In kindergarten, students spend the year delving into not only what makes each one of them unique, but also what connects them to families, communities, and the world around them.
- **Communities Around the World.** In first grade, children look at the rich communities within Jersey City before creating “passports” enabling them to travel the world. As they learn about various communities from around the world, they gain an appreciation for the common needs that bind us all together.

Children explore each thematic unit through an array of disciplines, with science, technology, math, history, social studies, and other forms of knowledge integrated into their learning. For instance, first graders might begin thinking about world communities by examining globes and atlases. Very quickly, learning becomes more tangible as students begin to learn about the countries from which their families originated. As they investigate each part of the world represented within their own classroom, they read stories, hear music, taste food, study geography and industry from that region or nation, and so much more.

EXPLORE

Further, this learning unit provides a perfect opportunity for parents to come into the classroom and share their own expertise about their family's homeland or heritage. This rich interdisciplinary learning continually stems from and is reinforced by lessons in math, science, and language arts.

Specials classes in music, art, movement, and Spanish are integrated into a full curriculum, and taught by specialist teachers. The thematic learning taking place within the children's classrooms is often emphasized within the specials classes, creating a cohesive learning experience.

The community is emphasized in the curriculum, which brings together **enduring relationships among families, volunteers, and community partners** who are committed to children. Further, parents are valued as partners in the education of the child. Indeed, parents are encouraged to volunteer at the school—helping with lunch duty, reading stories in the classroom, bringing in snacks on their child's birthday, assisting the specialist teachers, and so on. And for those parents who are not available during the school day, there are plenty of other ways to help out through the Family School Association.

From the Chair of the Board of Trustees

WHAT WE SAY, DECIDE, AND DO, shows what we have learned from the ethical situation and models it for others. The 5-year old shares crayon and paper, learns to sit still during story time, takes turns in helping out in the classroom, and already understands what it means to be fair or unfair. The first-grader finds himself or herself in an expanding community with new relationships and opportunities to master. And so it goes throughout their lives and ours. Because we know how necessary and often puzzling doing the right thing can be, we are committed to helping our children and each other become morally reflective, knowledgeable, and skilled in dealing with each ethical situation. Classroom ethics instruction, community service, and a respectful learning environment are as much a theme of our mission as are basic skills and the arts and sciences. At TECCS, families, teachers, staff, and board are drawn together in this inclusive commitment: to build an ethical community, to model it for others, and to help our students as they grow to become better persons and effective citizens.

—Howard B. Radest, Chair, Board of Trustees, TECCS

ENRICH

Our Principal: *Marta Bergamini*

MS. BERGAMINI HAS THE DEPTH OF EXPERIENCE required to create and maintain excellent progress at the school. She was an administrator and Teacher in Charge at Haworth Public School where her teaching role was in world language education. In 2007, she was awarded the **Governor's Teacher Recognition Award**. In 2008, she was recognized for her work improving the professional development of teachers. Mrs. Bergamini holds a master's degree in Educational Leadership.

Ms. Bergamini is delighted to be a part of the Jersey City educational community, where she finds that the "diverse background of the families and the dedication of parents make the school special." She has hired an **impressive roster of teachers who are "energetic and creative"**; and each of those teachers has "a strong work ethic."

Mrs. Bergamini believes that the success of all students at TECCS is due to:

- Establishing an atmosphere of fairness and honesty, where acting in an ethical manner is the norm.
- Creating an environment where an inquisitive mind is encouraged and the natural ability of students is recognized and fostered.
- Offering the latest in instructional programs which will contribute to student and staff growth.
- Cultivating an atmosphere of collaboration with all of the parents and the community.



Our Families

THE ETHICAL COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL is an ideal school for children of families that actively embrace the ideals of ethics, service, and social justice together with a demanding, **well-rounded education of academic studies and the arts**. Children come from all over Jersey City, many on buses organized by parents, and over a dozen languages are spoken among our diverse families.

Admissions

APPLICATIONS FOR THE 2010-11 SCHOOL YEAR must be received by Monday, January 11, 2010. All new students of The Ethical Community Charter School will be selected by a public enrollment lottery to be held on Friday, January 15, 2010. We will hold additional lotteries throughout the spring and summer to process applications received after the January 11 deadline.

Based on the lottery results, applicants are either accepted or placed on the waiting list. Waitlisted families are notified throughout the year as seats in the appropriate grade become available. The school must fill its spots with Jersey City applicants before it can accept any out-of-town applicants. Additionally, in an effort to keep family members together, siblings are given preference in the lottery. No other preference is given to any student in the enrollment process for any reason.

To apply, please download the application form from the school's website (www.teccsjc.org) and return it by fax, email, or postal mail before the January 11 deadline to:

The Ethical Community Charter School
95 Broadway
Jersey City, NJ 07306
Phone: 201-984-4156
Fax: 201-200-9931

Please note: Kindergarten students must be 5 years old on or before October 1, 2010.

