



THE ETHICAL COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL

(201) 984-4156
fax (201) 200-9931

95 Broadway
Jersey City, NJ 07306
www.teccsjc.org

FALL 2010 NEWSLETTER

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Greetings to all of our returning parents, and a warm welcome to those of you who are new to our school community. The Family School Association (FSA) is an integral part of how our school functions and exists to support the school through parent involvement and to represent the voice of the parents in school matters. Whether it is finding volunteers for lunch or creating the Fall Festival for our children, the FSA is at the heart of our school and the school's efforts to build a community. We are all very excited to take what we began in our first year and build on it as we grow. This year we seem to be exploding with volunteers for lunch and people chomping at the bit to help with the library, which is slated to open next month. I am thrilled to see the enthusiasm of our new parents, and the continuing commitment of the parents who helped start it all last year.

Our new Communications Committee, which includes our Outreach and Publications Committee, is helping redesign how we communicate with each other and with the greater community, and our Programs and Assemblies Committee is organizing wonderful assemblies for our kids. Our Fundraising Committee has begun planning for the year, with a 5K race on the schedule for the spring, and our Volunteer Committee is filling lunch slots as fast as they are made available. We also work with the Facilities Committee, which has done such a lovely job of brightening our school with the help of many parent volunteers, and the Technology Committee which help keeps us up and running 365 days of the year.

I am hoping to see many of you next week at the Fall Festival on Friday, October 29. We are more than halfway to completing the list of supplies we need for it, but still need more parent volunteers to help out the day of, and a couple to do some organizing this week. This will be our first opportunity of the year to create a really fun day for our kids, without it being about how much candy they can eat, or who has the best costume.

Thank you all for the hard work that is happening in the committees, and for the many volunteer hours which have already been put in throughout the school. Our parents are our strongest assets; together we can help create a wonderful school for our children.

Sincerely,

Bess Morrison, FSA President
bess.morrison@teccsjc.org

EDUCATE

EXPLORE

ENRICH



School Contact Information:

Please take note of the school's new phone numbers:

Main: 201-984-4156

Miriam Oyola (Executive Secretary):
201-984-4151
email: miriam.oyola@teccsjc.org

MaryAnne Wilkins (Nurse):
201-984-4152
maryanne.wilkins@teccsjc.org

Nick Puzo (Business Administrator):
201-984-4154
nick.puzo@teccsjc.org

All other faculty email addresses are:
firstname.lastname@teccsjc.org

School Web site:
www.teccsjc.org

FSA Board Officers:

Bess Morrison, **President**
Betsey Barnum, **Vice President**
Dylan Cohen, **Treasurer**
Clemence Taillandier, **Secretary**

FSA Committee Chair Contact Information:

Fundraising Committee
Ling Chen
ling.chen@teccsjc.org

Lunch Committee
Yssa Bobrow
yssa.bobrow@teccsjc.org

Communications
Vikki Michalios
vikki.nyc@gmail.com
Lisa Shillo Acevedo
lschillo2000@yahoo.com

Programs and Assemblies
Li Digraca
li.dagraca@teccsjc.org

Technology
Edward Secades
edward.secades@teccsjc.org

Facilities
Edward Goodall
goodalle@yahoo.co.uk

A NOTE FROM THE BOARD

Greetings families,

I'd like to begin with an enormous thank you to all of you, our families and friends, who have supported The Back to School Fundraising Campaign so enthusiastically. A little over a month ago, the Board of Trustees was looking for creative ways to expand our school's staffing in areas of unanticipated but critical need. Yet thanks to the amazing response to our funding requests, we now have money available to round out our staffing both in the office and the classroom and to augment our program in other important ways.

Our sincere appreciation goes to Robert and Nora Radest of Summit, NJ whose generous challenge grants have enabled us to raise \$46,000 toward our \$50,000 goal in three short weeks. But we are not done yet—we have one more fundraiser on Saturday, November 6 (see calendar for details). Please join us that evening or make a contribution online at www.teccsjc.org. I am confident we can not only meet our \$50,000 goal, but surpass it. Every dollar counts!

Speaking of counting, the Count Day mailing to Governor Christie has been an incredible success. In recognition of October 15, the day when public schools submit their enrollment numbers to the state for per-pupil funding, TECCS joined with other local charters to create the Jersey City Charter School Alliance and to ask "Don't We Count?" We have mailed almost 250 postcards, demanding more money for Jersey City's charter schools, which are among the lowest funded schools in the state. Charter schools are public schools, and our children count just as much as anyone else. The Alliance will continue to pressure the Governor and our elected officials for equal funding for all public schools in the coming months, as the state legislature begins its review of the education funding formula. Stay tuned for more events and activities. The price of silence is too high.

Finally, if you are on Facebook, please visit or "like" the school's page by searching for The Ethical Community Charter School—Jersey City. We will keep you up to date on happenings at the school, the latest news in charter school advocacy, fundraising activities—including DonorsChoose.org classroom projects posted by our teachers—that bring in much-needed revenue for us, and so much more.

All my best,
Ann Wallace
Vice Chair, Board of Trustees

THE FSA & COMMITTEES

TECCS was founded by parents who wanted an extraordinary education and a strong involvement in their child's education. The Family School Association (FSA) committee is essentially the PTA for TECCS. The goal of FSA is to let you have a great impact on the success of your child's education.

According to the Michigan Department of Education, studies show: The more intensely parents are involved, the more beneficial the achievement effects. The more parents participate in schooling, in a sustained way, at every level—in advocacy, decision-making and oversight roles, as fundraisers and boosters, as volunteers and paraprofessionals, and as home teachers—the better for student achievement.

Education is a cooperation between parents, teachers and the children that are being taught. Our children are successful when we work together as a community. The more involved you are, the more you help plan and join in school events, the more your children can reach important goals for learning and success. FSA is the organization through which a parent can become involved and help not just with the success of the school but with the overall success of your child as well. Please consider joining one or more of the following committees:

FUNDRAISING Committee – Ling Chen

The fundraising committee is made up of two parts: The Board fundraising which focuses on corporate sponsorships and grants, and the FSA fundraising which is parent-driven. Both groups mutually support each other's efforts to raise funding for the school. The Back to School Events have been a great success, and we have just become Amazon Associates. Once the link is up on our site, the school will receive a percentage of anything anyone buys from Amazon, when going through the link. We are looking for a few more enthusiastic parents with a range of skills to help in every aspect on every level of fundraising this year.

VOLUNTEERS Committee, Yssa Bobrow

The volunteers committee has been responsible for all of the lunch/recess/library volunteering so far this year. We need a few good people to take on the same function for special events, festivals, etc., and someone to be a back-up on the lunch system. It is a great job for someone who works from home or is a stay-at-home parent, as it is primarily done on-line and by phone. Please contact Yssa (yssa.bobrow@teccsjc.org) if you are interested in helping.

COMMUNICATIONS Committee, Vikki Michalios and Lisa Shillo Acevedo

The goal of the Communications Committee is to deliver clear and concise communications to parents and the community from the FSA in conjunction with the school and the Board of Trustees. The Communications co-chairs will take the lead on this coordination and ensure that parent volunteers are assigned to support a number of areas that fall within the mandate of the Communications Committee:

- Newsletter: Produce a report, in print and online, every 1-2 months that summarizes FSA activities and upcoming events, as well as other important information for the school such as teacher profiles.
- Public Outreach and Publicity: Raise awareness of TECCS in the community through the media and talking directly to Headstart programs, preschools, day cares, community organizations and relevant government organizations.
- Web and Social Media: Coordinate updates on TECCS Facebook page and website.
- Class Parent Phone Calls: Coordinate with the school administration and teachers in the use of the Class Parents to make phone calls directly to parents regarding critical events or volunteer needs.

PROGRAMS & ASSEMBLIES Committee, Li Dagraca

The Program and Assembly Committee is responsible for finding educational programs that reinforce what the students are learning at school. The committee works closely with the principal and teachers to determine which programs work best. For example, in January, we brought in Little Dragon's Digestive System, a Liberty Science Center Traveling Program into the school for a 1-hour assembly, which worked very well with TECCS themes: learning about myself (K) and learning about basic needs (1st). We welcome ideas and volunteers with all backgrounds who share the goal of bringing fun and educational programs and assemblies into TECCS.

TECHNOLOGY Committee, Edward Secades

The Technology Committee had a very successful first year establishing services and equipment needed to support our school staff and committees. This year we will be focusing on improving support and management of existing services as well as ensuring new initiatives are properly supported. We will also be announcing our new Technology Web page in the very near future where you will be able to find more information on the services we provide, our 3 year technology plan, and useful technology tips to help make technology a useful tool at home. We welcome help from anybody with technology experience and really need technical writers to help document our processes and runbooks. Email the Technology Committee: support@teccsjc.org or call the school to leave a message for Edward Secades, to contact you directly.

FACILITIES Committee, Edward Goodall

Working on the school in spring and summer was a great way for parents to meet each other and make some improvements to current rooms, the new second grade classrooms, and the soon-to-be open library. We were able to hand the rooms and work we had done to the new custodian—Michael Bailey—who expertly finished our endeavors. Having a diligent custodian means that in the future, less work should be required on setting up the school for the following year. This will allow parents more time to look at special projects that add to the school's environment.

The school has a new water filter system on each teaching floor. This will reduce the monthly Poland Spring bill for the FSA, reduce maintenance required by Mr. Bailey, and give us peace of mind that the drinking water is clean and free of lead and other contaminants. Thanks to Derrick's father—David Banks—for fitting this and for being the liaison between us and Poland Spring.

REMINDERS:

Important Dates:

Tuesday, November 9th:

FSA Meeting 7:00 pm

Tuesday, November 16th:

Class Bookfair 11:00 am - 11:20 pm

and 1 pm - 8 pm

Parent Teacher Conferences 4-8 pm

Thursday, November 18th:

Bookfair 4-8 pm

Parent Teacher Conferences 4-8 pm

Friday, November 19th:

Bookfair 11:00-11:20 and 1:00-3:50 pm

Saturday, November 20th:

9 am TECCS Board Meeting

1 pm Open House

*Don't forget: 9:30 am every Friday, tours of the school for new applicants

Help us spread the word that TECCS is now accepting applications for the 2011-12 school year for kindergarten through grade 3. We will be holding open houses every Friday morning at 9:30am. Evening and weekend open houses will be scheduled soon.

Siblings of current TECCS students have preference in the lottery, but parents must complete an application form in order to secure a spot. Packets are available in the office. All applications are due by January 10.

TEACHER SPOTLIGHT

This month our special spotlight is on Ms. Jamie D'Amico . Ms. D'Amico is a first grade teacher, this is her second year at TECCS.



What first drew you to teaching?

My mom was a teacher for many years and we would always see her former students when we were out either shopping or at restaurants. They would say to her that she inspired them so much and that it was because of my mom that they followed their dreams. I want to do the same for my students and be an inspiration to them.

When you were a child, what was your favorite subject in school?

I always loved math when I was in school.

What do you love doing out of school?

I love reading, spending time with family and friends, watching Yankee games, and shopping!

What drew you to work at TECCS-JC, in particular?

I really liked the school's mission to incorporate ethics and community service into the curriculum. I think it is very important for children to begin making ethical choices and become active members in their community.

What does ethical culture look like in an elementary classroom?

In an elementary classroom, ethical culture is shown in several ways. Sharing, listening to peers, respecting one another and accepting each other's differences are a few.

What is something you would like to see at the school that may or may not be possible right away?

In the future I would love to have a roof top garden or playground. I would also like to see a computer lab since technology is such a big part of education right now.

OUR SCHOOL

The New School Library

Ms. Caggiano, one of our Kindergarten teachers, is working diligently on outfitting the school library while currently on maternity leave. On October 15th she posted a request on donorschoose.org website—a site that allows the public to donate to teachers' school supply requests across the country. Within three days the request for \$787.42 for 3 bean bag chairs and a rug was fulfilled by several donors—including one from as far away as Arizona! Check out TECCS facebook page for updates on additional TECCS teachers posting classroom donation requests. And thanks to all of you who support our childrens' education!