

School Year 2018 - 2019

Dear TEECS Families,

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome each of you and your families to Thomas Edison EnergySmart Charter School (TEECS). As TEECS PTO board members, it is among our responsibilities to talk with you about our organization, enroll you as a member, and very importantly, encourage you to get involved in our school. But first, since this may be the first time TEECS, for many of you, it is important for us to explain what the PTO is all about.

What is the PTO and who can be a Member?

A PTO's primary objective is to support the school and its students. How that is accomplished is up to us, the parents. Volunteerism and fundraising are usually the two items needed for an effective PTO.

The TEECS PTO has identified 2 key goals for which we would require fundraising in the 2018 - 2019 school year. In addition to the main goals, we require funds for supporting events that are extra curricular for the students and areas that are underfunded.

The two main goals for which funds are required are; contributing to the setup of the Hight School science lab and the TEECS Makerspace library. We will also use funds for teacher appreciation, support of activities such as school dances, graduations, and sometime, we may also buy big ticket items such as printers, computers, risers for stage, sound systems, etc.

Becoming a member does not mean you automatically sign up to volunteer, it just means you support our group and believe in what we're doing. **You will see our membership tables at all of the Back to School nights this September. All parents and caregivers, along with school faculty can be members, for only \$10/family!** Please enroll or renew your membership for 2018-19 and help us achieve our goals!

PTO Programs & Fundraising

Our primary objective as a PTO is to provide our schools with funds, programs, resources and services that will enrich and maximize the education of every child. To meet this important objective, and afford services that are no longer covered by our school budgets, we must fundraise. Though it may not be our favorite responsibility, it is a necessary one.

Our main goals for the 2018 - 2019 year are

1. Contributing to the setup of the High School Science Lab
2. Contributing to School Library MakerSpace, Digital learning subscriptions such as RAZ kids, periodicals, research site subscription such as ref-work

In order to support our main goals, we will be running a series of fundraisers this year, including but not limited to; Dine-outs, TEECS Festival, Harlem Wizards event, Bowling

night, Holiday Shop, Cookies with Santa, etc . We will continue collecting BOX TOPS, running the Scrips program, teacher appreciation gifts (during the holidays), Amazon smiles, and other programs throughout the year. Information on most fundraising events already scheduled is updated on the website.

This year, the PTO has also formed a “**parent buddy system**”. Starting in a new school can be exciting but getting around in the new school, your children making new friends, understanding the new systems, etc. is where the newcomers may need some assistance. In addition to resources available from the school, the PTO has identified parent buddies whom you can call to ask questions about how to get around TEECS in the first three months. Buddy names and email addresses are provided at the end of this welcome letter. Additionally, we will be creating a general PTO WhatsApp group (TEECS PTO 2018 - 2019) and grade specific WhatsApp groups for the new year.

Become a Volunteer...Why YOU should get involved!

As you can see, we are a busy group. This is where you can come in! We need your help, and so do your children. **Over 500 independent studies on parent involvement show that when parents get involved in their children’s education grades go up, test scores improve, children are more likely to attend better schools after high school, they have fewer discipline problems and they’re less likely to use drugs and alcohol. Get involved TODAY!**

Please look at the PTO volunteer sheet, indicate what events/activities interest you, and we’ll contact you to discuss it further. A volunteer table will also be set up at all of the Back to School nights. Stop by to see all of our volunteer opportunities! Volunteering doesn’t have to mean a huge time commitment. We understand it is increasingly more difficult to find time to give, but please, whatever your time schedule allows, we have need of you. We even have tasks that can be performed in the evenings, during the day or that don’t even involve coming to the school at all.

TEECS PTO is Going Green

Keeping in line with TEECS beliefs in being green, we are starting an effort this year to dramatically reduce our paper usage. This will help our environment AND reduce our expenses. Rather than send home fliers, we will include all PTO news and information on the weekly newsletter that will be sent by school administration and we will post information on the PTO page at <http://www.teecs.org/pto/>. By September you will see contact information for our PTO board, a fall calendar of events, volunteer opportunities, parenting resources, and other useful information. Check it out!

In conclusion

Our parent group is about men and women working together toward a common goal. That goal, simply stated, is creating a better school and a better educational experience for our children. We strive to create an atmosphere where teachers, administrators, and support staff can do

their best work – and so can our children. There is so much more that can be done and we need your help. We invite you to join us for the first PTO meeting on September 17, 2018 at 6pm in the school cafeteria. We look forward to meeting you!

On behalf of the TEECS PTO we would once again like to extend a warm welcome and best wishes for a successful school year! Please contact any of us with questions or comments. Enjoy the rest of your summer!

Sincerely,
TEECS PTO Board

TEECS PTO Board 2018 - 2019

Jennifer Zinna - PTO President - ptopresident@energysmartschool.org

Dhani Abey - VP 1 - ptovpresident1@energysmartschool.org

Milton Augustine - VP 2 - ptovpresident2@energysmartschool.org

Nadina Cryan - Treasurer - ptotreasurer@energysmartschool.org

Coleen Rooney - Communications - ptosecretary@energysmartschool.org

PTO Calendar of Events

August 27 – Orientation, New member registration

September 11th - Dine-Out - Applebee's Bridgewater - 11am - 8pm

October 6th - Dine-Out - Chipotle North Brunswick - 4pm - 8pm

November 6th - Dine-Out - Red Robin Piscataway 4pm - 8pm

November 16th - Bowling - \$15/person - Includes 2 Hrs of bowling, shoes, 1 slice of pizza, chips, drinks

December 14th - Dine Out - Panera - 441 Elizabeth Ave Somerset NJ 08873 - 4pm - 8pm

December - Holiday Shop and Cookies with Santa

January 18th - Dine Out - Mooya - 441 Elizabeth Ave Franklin Twp NJ 08873 - 11am - 9:30pm

February 14th - Valentine's day candy grams - \$1 candy gram - Chocolate kisses with a note

Feb 21st - Dine-Out - Stage House Tavern - 1719 Amwell Rd Somerset NJ 08873 - 5pm - 10pm

March 30th - Harlem Wizards Basketball Event - Major fundraiser, all hands on deck - Franklin High School Gym

April -

May 6th - Spring Festival

May - 31 - School Dance - Franklin Twp Fire Station - Hollywood Ave

June - TBD

PTO Meeting Schedule - Venue TEECS Cafeteria - Time 6pm EST

September 17
October 16
November 15
December 17
January 15

February 11
March 12
April 11
May 14
June - TBD

Parent Buddies for New/Incoming TEECS Families

Please contact the following parents for assistance with your onboarding process at TEECS. These parents can assist you with understanding who to call, how to navigate the various student systems, how to get involved in school, and help you find a buddy for your child if necessary.

Kindergarten and 1st and 3rd Grades - Jennifer Zinna-Chatman -

ptopresident@energysmartschool.org

2nd and 4th Grades - Dhani Abey - ptovpresident1@energysmartschool.org and
732-241-2152 Mobile

5th and 6th Grades - Coleen Rooney - ptosecretary@energysmartschool.org

7th and 8th Grades - Nadina Cryan - ptotreasurer@energysmartschool.org

9th and 10th Grades - Milton Augustine - ptovpresident2@energysmartschool.org

10 Reasons to get Involved at School

1 Volunteering makes a big difference. Research consistently shows that kids whose parents are involved in their schools do better.

2 Volunteering offers tangible ways to be part of things. Sometimes we might mean well, but our busy lives get in the way of committing. Joining a parent group will provide concrete ways to get involved, whether at events, in the classroom, or on a committee.

3 It feels great to participate! Your child spends a lot of time at school, and it's great to share some of her school-related experiences with her.

4 You'll get to know other parents. It's powerful to create a circle of adult friends around a school, and having a shared interest is a good place to start. What's more, it can help foster connections between families in your community.

5 Your help is always needed. Whether it's helping run the next big event or providing support in the classroom, there are always ways to pitch in.

6 It's a manageable commitment. Volunteering can seem daunting, but it doesn't have to be. Spend an hour at a bingo night or talent show, and your efforts will be appreciated. And remember, it's always OK to say no when you're busy.

7 It's fun! Even simple events like pizza nights and family reading nights can spice up your week.

8 You can tailor volunteering to play to your strengths. Within a parent group or school community there are many ways to contribute, some of which are sure to complement your strengths, interests, or professional skills.

9 Have a great idea? Volunteering gives you opportunities to get your ideas out there.

10 Volunteering provides another way to get to know school and support staff to bet