



TEECS PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

WELCOME TO THE 2019 - 2020 ACADEMIC YEAR

TEECS PTO Board 2019 - 2020

Jennifer Zinna-Chatman - PTO President - ptopresident@energysmartschool.org

Dhani Abey - VP - ptovpresident1@energysmartschool.org

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Colleen Rooney - Communications - ptosecretary@energysmartschool.org

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 at 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?

PTO is the parent teacher organization and the primary objective for the PTO 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 2019 - 2020 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 High 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 sometimes, 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 2019-2020 and help us achieve our goals!

PTO Programs & Fundraising

Our primary objective as a PTO is to provide our school 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 2019 - 2020 year are

1. Contributing to help purchase additional equipment for 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 Indoor Market/Bring and Buy Sale, Bowling night, Holiday Shop, Cookies with Santa, etc . We will continue collecting BOX TOPS, running the Sprints program, teacher appreciation, Amazon smiles, and other programs

throughout the year. Information on most fundraising events already scheduled is updated on the website.

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 the resources available from the school admin, 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 2019 - 2020) and grade specific WhatsApp groups for the new year, allowing all TEECS parents to stay connected and communicating with other parents in real-time.

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

The PTO exec board consists of 5 volunteers; PTO President, VP1, VP2, Secretary and Treasurer. We need your help as we are all full time parents and employees. **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 sheets, 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, whether it's your time, a donation for an event, or your ability to help in other ways, we need whatever you can give.

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 the 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 12, 2019 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

PTO Dine-Out Events

A Dine-Out is when a restaurant has agreed to give TEECS PTO a portion of the revenue generated by TEECS staff, admin, parents and children dining at a restaurant on a specific date. Dine-outs for the 2019 - 2020 year are listed below.

September 19 - On the Border - Rt 1 New Brunswick

October 11 - IHOP - Rt 27 Franklin Park

November 7 - California Pizza Kitchen - Bridgewater Mall

December - 16 - El Toro Loco - 3000 NJ-27, Kendall Park

January 22 - StageHouse Tavern - Amwell Rd Somerset

February 20 - Panera - Elizabeth Ave Somerset NJ

March 11 - Kurryzone - Cedargrove Lane Somerset

April 23 - Pasha Mediterranean - Franklin Park

May 14 - Mooyah - Somerset

PTO Meeting Schedule - TEECS Cafeteria - Time 6pm

September 12

December 12

February 11

May 11

October 14

January 13

March 12

June - TBD

November 12

January 13

April 16

PTO Fundraising and Social Events

Spirit Night - Build a TEECS Tiger- September

Bowling - Bowlero and Laser tag - November

Cookies with Santa - December 6

Talent Show - February

Somerset Patriots - April

Indoor Market - May - Bring and Buy Sale - We need donations of gently used or new items for this event.

School Dance - June 5

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 1st, 2nd and 3rd Grades - Jennifer Zinna-Chatman -

ptopresident@energysmartschool.org

4th and 5th Grades - Dhani Abey - ptovpresident1@energysmartschool.org and

732-241-2152 Mobile

6th and 7th Grades - Colleen Rooney - ptosecretary@energysmartschool.org

8th - 10th Grades - Milton Augustine ptotreasurer@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