

FRANKLIN (Somerset) – As most school buildings stand empty as virtual learning is the norm during the pandemic, the Thomas Edison EnergySmart Charter School, or TEECS, is looking to expand.

The school's application to add a second floor on the building it shares with Pharmscript at 150 Pierce St. is scheduled to be heard by the township zoning board in a 7:30 p.m. Thursday virtual meeting.

The school opened in 2013 and currently has about 500 students in grades K-12

A tuition-free charter school, TEECS is the first K-12 school in the state to focus on green/renewable energy.

TEECS accepts students from area school districts including Franklin, North Brunswick and South Brunswick.



Thomas Edison EnergySmart Charter School held a virtual awards ceremony on Wednesday, Nov. 18. --Courtesy Of TEECS

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TEECS is seeking approval for a 16,774-square-foot addition which would include five classrooms, a library, a multi-purpose room and a "bonus" room.

A use variance is needed because schools are not a permitted use in an M-2 zone. The school had previously received in 2015 but needs another variance for the addition.

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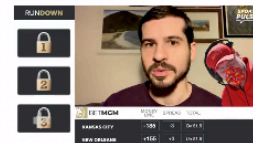
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The proposal also seeks to add parking under the addition on the front side of the existing building. The addition would result in a staff increase from 75 to 90 employees.

The proposal includes a parking expansion for Pharmscript to the north and west of the Pierce Street building.

The application would add three small bioretention basins to provide water quality treatment for the new impervious surfaces, associated site plan modifications including lighting and landscaping and to reduce portions of the wetlands buffer along the proposed parking area.


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The TEECS instructional methods have a green/renewable energy focus and the curriculum includes weekly offerings of physical education, art and music, including choir and band, as well as character education, computer science, STEM, SmartTech (green technology, and world languages including French, Spanish, Turkish and Hindi.

The model integrates community resources into the education program through services and support. Recently, TEECS began offering a unique dual enrollment high school program in affiliation with Raritan Valley Community College, that allows students to graduate with a diploma and college credits.

For more information about TEECS, go to [www.teecs.org](http://www.teecs.org).

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