

The Gecko

MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL:



Dear Concept Families,

The start of the 2024-2025 school year went amazingly well. Our students have connected with each other in a positive way and our attendance has been strong. The nine new students have been welcomed by our returning students and have added much positivity to our school. Thank you for sharing your students with us.

Please plan on attending our Parent Open House on Thursday, September 26, 2024, from 7:00 - 8:15 p.m. This will give you an opportunity to meet your student's teachers and find out what they will be learning about over the course of the year. We also will be holding parent/teacher conferences on October 17, 2024, from 1:00 - 7:30 p.m. However, feel free to reach out to any teacher should a question arise.

The students have been using the Yondr pouches without difficulty and I believe that they are relieved to be phone-free for the day. I appreciate your support of this plan and the teachers really see a big difference in student engagement in the classroom.

Finally, as our capital campaign, The Concept Grows, kicks into year two, please think about sources of funding that could help us reach our goal. Perhaps your place of employment, foundations you may know of, or relatives who may want to support our renovation plan. Every dollar helps!

Sincerely,
Bill



September 26: Family Open House – 7:00pm
October 14 – School Picture Day
October 17 – Parent Conferences – noon dismissal
October 18 – Teacher In-Service – no school
November 1 – End of 1st Marking Period
November 5 – Election Day – no school
November 27-29 – Thanksgiving Break



End of 23-24 School Year Pictures



Staff at 2024 Graduation



Sam Mandell at NHD



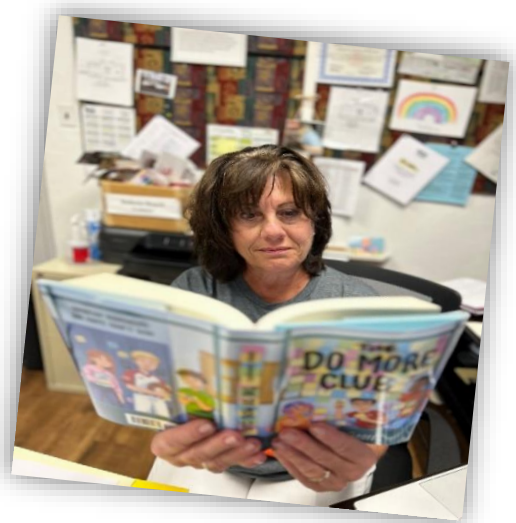
School Soccer Game



Marti Phillip's Retirement Party



Sean's Senior Prank



Dean's Deal

“The Opportunity School”

I would first like to thank Mr. Bennett and the TCS Board for the promotion to Dean of Students. I am very grateful for the opportunity to serve our community in a new capacity, while continuing to provide mental and emotional support to our students as the lead counselor. I would also like to thank my amazing colleagues and the students of TCS for helping me consistently feel like a valued member of the community.

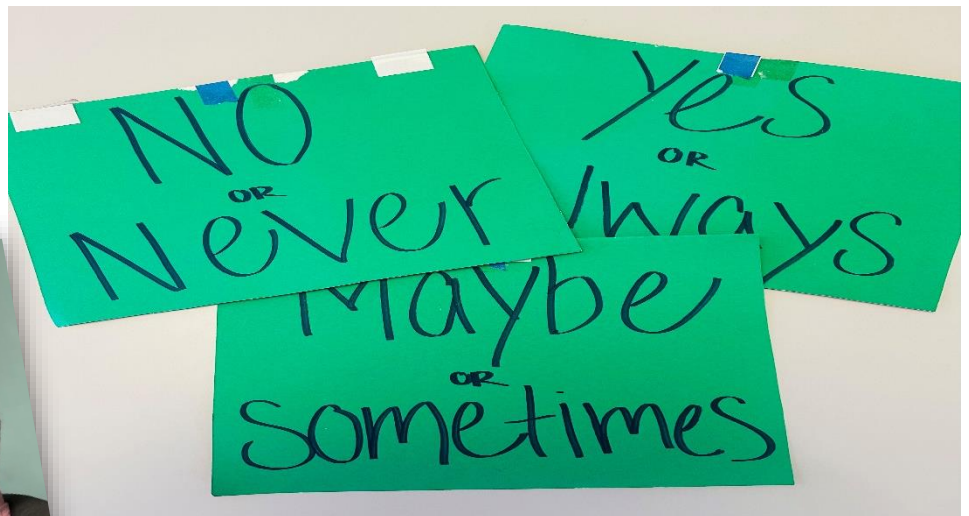
I recall first arriving at TCS. I couldn't believe this cozy building was a real school! It was a welcomed change from my previous placement and I knew I had to work here. As I interviewed and toured the building, one word kept popping into my mind: *opportunity*. I saw (and still see) TCS as a unique opportunity to make a difference in students' lives.

On the first day of school, I facilitate an activity that involves me making a statement, followed by students and staff demonstrating their response by walking to a section of the APR labeled, “Yes/Always,” “No/Never”, or “Maybe/Sometimes”. Discussions and explanations usually ensue, but the main goal of the activity is to recognize some of the things we have in common, along with differences- all without saying a word.

This year's group did an amazing job with this activity and a few brave students and staff openly shared the reason for their answers, whether it was a summer activity they participated in or why pineapple on pizza is a legitimate topping (No, we will not be offering this topping choice on Fridays!). No matter the disagreements, it was a way for all of us to feel connected. I believe it is that feeling of connection that will sustain us throughout the entire school year.

I look forward to supporting our students as they continue to connect, learn, grow, and seize the opportunity that is TCS.

Mr. Schullery





This year, The Concept School Community is happy to welcome Ms. Annamarie Cuff, Transitions Coordinator, and Ms. Laura Daniels, German Teacher.



Annamarie Cuff is thrilled to join The Concept School community this year as the Transition Coordinator! She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology with a Minor in Women's and Gender Studies and a Master's degree in Education in School Counseling, all from West Chester University of Pennsylvania. Anna looks forward to working with students, staff, administration, and families at TCS. In her free time, she enjoys following Philly sports, practicing yoga, watching movies, and spending time with family and friends.

Laura Daniels is very excited to be welcomed into The Concept School family, sharing her passion for German and languages with the amazing students here. She has been fluent in German since living and studying abroad in her late teens and early twenties and majored in German at Drew University with a double minor in Anthropology and Linguistics. Her Master's degree in Secondary Education is from West Chester University. Over the past 19 years, she has taught every level of German, from young learners in German 1A all the way to Juniors and Seniors in the International Baccalaureate program at the STEM Academy in Downingtown, PA. She lives in Phoenixville with her loving husband, their two incredible neurodivergent children, their wonderful dog Ginger, sweet cockatiel Pearl, feisty conure Eva, and their 19 adorable chickens. She is so excited to be part of such a special place, and thrilled to be working with our students.




Saturday, October 12th, 2024
11-1PM
Chester County Library, Exton, PA

Meet the team behind the best-selling new release, **The Tabby Did It!**

Buy signed copies of the cozy mystery charity anthology perfect for all ages!

One of our teachers, Mary Culler, is a published author and she put together an anthology of short stories written by herself, TCS students and staff, and other authors. All proceeds will benefit our Capital Campaign. Here is a link to purchase the book. We will also have copies for sale available at school.



<https://www.amazon.com/Tabby-Did-Mystery-Charity-Anthology-ebook/dp/B0D267NGYC>



WHERE UNIQUE MINDS
LEARN IN UNIQUE WAYS

THE CONCEPT SCHOOL

MAXIMIZE YOUR IMPACT, MINIMIZE YOUR TAXES! DISCOVER THE BENEFITS OF TCS'S EITC SCHOLARSHIP!

Help us at The Concept School transform the lives of middle and high school students who learn differently by creating a safe, intimate, educational environment where every student is welcomed, accepted, and becomes their authentic self.



Best Regards,

Bill Bennett
Head of School

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?
Businesses w/ PA tax Liability

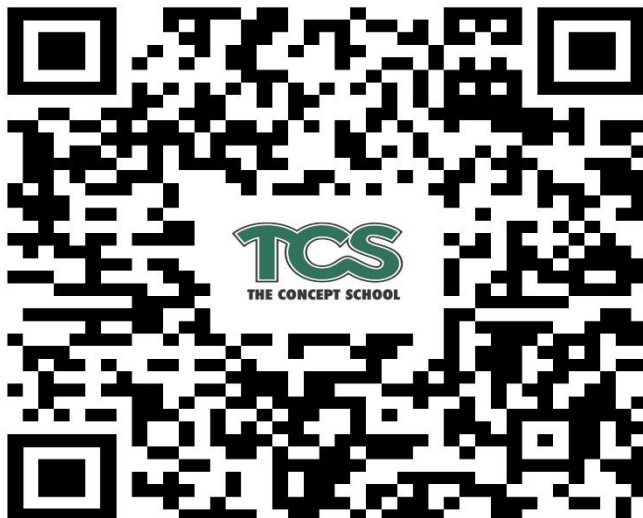
WHY SHOULD I PARTICIPATE?
Provide tuition assistance to families in need in your community and receive up to a 90% tax credit.

HOW MUCH SHOULD I CONTRIBUTE?
From a min. of \$1000 to a max. of \$750,000.

Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program

Businesses are able to redirect their PA state tax dollars to fund a scholarship that supports multiple students attending schools of their choice in select south central PA Counties AND receive up to a 90% tax credit from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Learn more about EITC and become a TCS Donor [HERE!](#)





Ms. Cuff's Transitions Class:

THE CHESTER COUNTY
COLLEGE FAIR
 OCTOBER 14 | 6:00 - 8:00 PM | UNITED SPORTS

MEET WITH COLLEGES AND INSTITUTIONS.
 LEARN ABOUT POSTSECONDARY OPTIONS.
 SET YOUR GOALS.

**FREE
 ADMISSION**

REGISTER
 TODAY!




SPONSORED BY




For more information, visit:
www.cciu.org/college-fair

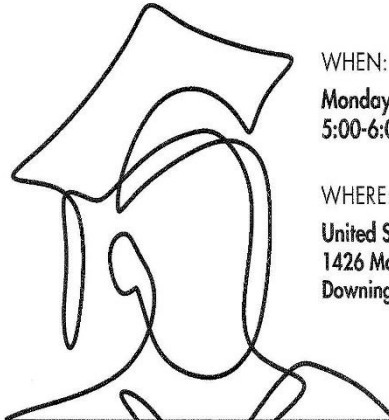
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THE CHESTER COUNTY
COLLEGE FAIR

**TRANSITIONING BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL:
 POSTSECONDARY OPTIONS FOR ALL ABILITIES**

Join us at the 2024 Chester County College Fair for a specialized one-hour pre-event program designed for learners with disabilities and their families.

Get answers about post-high school options and meet representatives from local colleges and trade schools offering specialized programs and support.



WHEN: _____

**Monday, October 14
 5:00-6:00 p.m.**

WHERE: _____

**United Sports
 1426 Marshallton Thorndale Road
 Downingtown, PA 19335**

Hear from and meet with
 representatives from
 colleges that have programs
 just for you!



FREE ADMISSION

SCAN QR CODE TO REGISTER



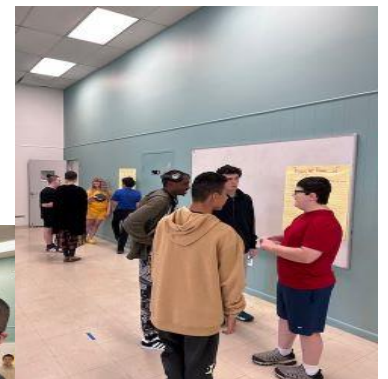
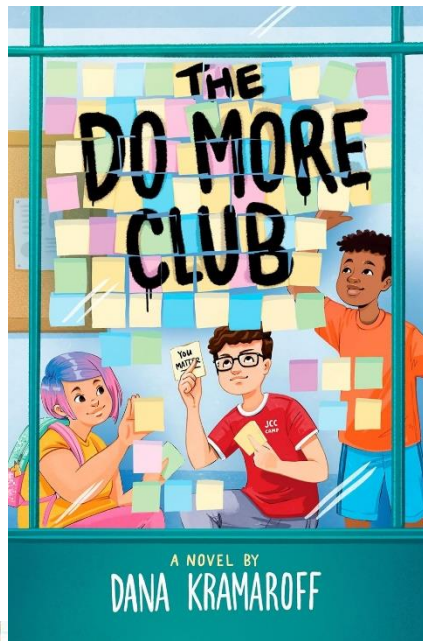
WWW.CCIU.ORG/COLLEGE-FAIR

Mrs. Griffith's English Classes:

It feels like a long time ago that we were canoeing down the Brandywine in June. What a fun day! The kids navigated rocks and brush, worked with a partner to steer and stay afloat, and overcame discomfort proving to themselves that they can do hard things! For many kids, canoeing was a first-time experience; I can say we all had a great time!

I am so happy to be back to this small learning community. I missed my students over the summer! I love to read, and I love teaching at TCS, so I thought it would be cool to have a school-wide book club. Teachers, staff, and students were all gifted the novel-in-verse *The Do More Club* written by my National Writing Project Fellow, Dana Kramaroff. To launch the book, we gathered as a whole community enjoying fun, team building activities in the APR in which students came to the conclusion that we are all more alike than we are different! In individual English classes, students are delving into non-fiction articles about the hate crime that occurred just down the street from our school at FarmerJawn's (which many of our kids visited on a school field trip or pass by in their buses). This incident, sadly and coincidentally, ties into the initiating incident of our novel.

Thanks to Mr. Bennett for purchasing a book for each student to put on their personal bookshelf as a powerful reminder of the lessons we will be learning as a whole school! Showing kindness trumps hate!





Mrs. Culler's Classes:

Mrs. Culler's Anatomy and Life Science Classes are starting off the year learning about the smallest units of life, the cells. This week, we had fun examining cells of plants, animals, and even cells from the students under microscopes. Students are looking forward to making edible cell models in class in the upcoming weeks!

Mrs. Culler's History classes are exploring American history in AP US History and 20th Century American History. Students in AP History are working on analyzing primary sources and historical documents as they learn to answer Document-Based Questions. Students in 20th Century American History are learning about the industrialization of America and how we are still feeling the impacts of it today.



Mrs. Frederick's Classes:

Mrs. Fredericks's **Pixar class** is learning about creating stories for animation. We've talked about movies and animations that they like and what characters and worlds they live in. We've taken apart those stories and switched out characters and worlds to see what would happen, "What if..." We've examined Pixar trailers and shorts to see what makes them good stories. Special thanks to Mr. Schullery for sharing his expertise in film production and story creation and helping our students!

Mrs. Fredericks's **3D printing class** consists of students in 3D Printing 1 and students in 3D Printing 2 (those students who have had 3D printing 1). The students in 3D Printing 1 are learning how to use Tinkercad and how to start creating projects. Students in 3D Printing 2 are doing a refresher in 3D printing and will soon switch to a more advanced program, "Autodesk Fusion 360."



Mrs. Fredericks's **Photography class** is learning the camera. They learned about the parts of the camera, how to shoot, how to zoom in and out, how to change lenses, and how to upload to Google drive. We will next learn about the Exposure Triangle: Aperture, Shutter Priority, and ISO.

Mrs. Fredericks's **Video Editing class** became stars of the school this week. They created movie trailers in iMovie based on The American Film Institute's "The Door." We





had two groups, Emmy & Lilith and Colin & Gavin. Each group wrote their own stories centered around a door. They created a storyboard, recorded and edited the video. They were shown to the school during our Morning Meeting. Both videos were a hit! Special thanks to Mr. Schullery for sharing his expertise in Film Production and helping our students!

Mr. Burtch's Classes:

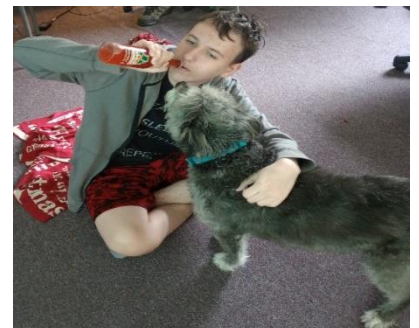


The new school year has begun. Students are studying math topics ranging from Basic Math and Pre-Algebra, through Algebra 1 and 2, Geometry to Trigonometry and Calculus. Students are off to a good start! Almost a dozen bottles of delicious, natural fruit flavored Jarritos have been awarded for excellence in math.



As a reminder, Mr. Burtch's students can win their choice of Jarritos for earning 94% or above (A or A+), on graded math assignments with assistance. Each winner also has their photo taken with Jasper ("Math Dog") who oversees the award ceremony.

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Mr. Burch & Ms. Tilmon's Classic Film Class:

Another elective class of Classic Cinema has begun! We started the year with the silent comedy classic, *City Lights* (1931). This movie is a masterpiece regardless of black & white or color, sound or silent. The class just finished the screwball comedy, *Nothing Sacred* (1937) and will shift "scariet" movies as we get into October.

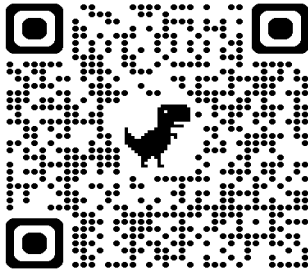


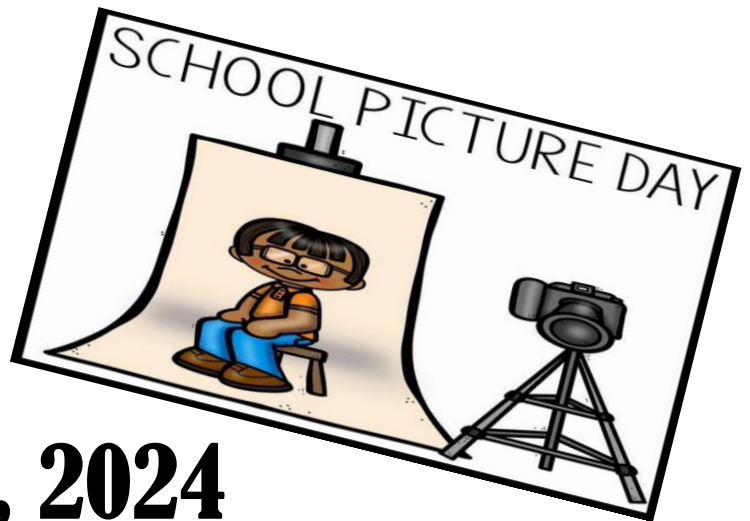
Spirit WEAR

Our 2024-2025 online clothing store has launched! Orders must be placed by **October 2nd!**

Here is the link to the ordering site:

<https://tuttlemarketing.chippily.com/TheConceptSchool/>





OCTOBER 14, 2024

TCS Picture Gallery

...just for fun!

First Day of School 2024



*22nd Annual
Golf
Fundraiser
at Glen Mills
Golf Course*

