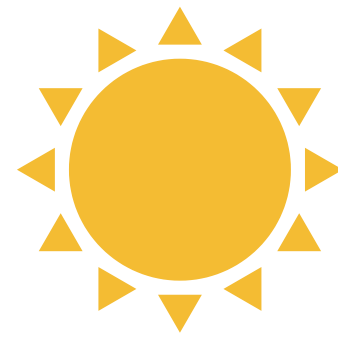




# Bennett's Bulletin

## with Mr. Bennett

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Dear Concept Families,

Spring has arrived and I could not be happier. We haven't had a winter like this past one and I hope it does not repeat itself next year. I appreciate your understanding of all of the virtual days so that we did not have to extend the school year.

We have had a lot of interest in our school this spring. There have been tours almost everyday for either enrollment now or in the fall. We have admitted several new students who have begun right away. Please remember that enrollment keeps us going and able to add to our offerings. If you know of anyone who may benefit from The Concept School, please refer them to me!

Please make sure to sign and return your student's contract for next year. It helps us plan for a successful year and make sure to craft a meaningful budget. I am sad to report that our technology coordinator, Sheila Fredericks, is retiring at the end of the school year. Sheila has been with us for 8 years and will be sorely missed. However, I am happy to tell you that we found an amazing replacement teacher. Dr. Naomi Hampson will be joining us in the fall. She will bring lots of experience and energy to our school as we use technology to enhance our course offerings.

We have our Spring Arts Festival coming up on May 21, 2026. It will begin at 6:00 p.m. where you can peruse the building to view our students' creativity in art, photography, and 3-D printing. At 7:00 p.m., our theater troupe will be putting on a play that will be sure to entertain you. I hope you will be able to join us.

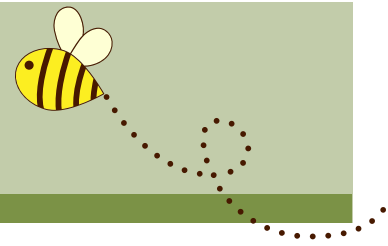
As always, thank you for your continued support and allowing us to work with your students.

Sincerely,  
Bill



# Dean's Deal

By: Mr. Schullery



## A Salute to a School of Service

A recent visit from staff at the Chester County Food Bank offered us a reminder of the importance of service in one's community. The students did a great job decorating cardboard boxes that would be sent to those in need. Although this was a project for an outside organization, the spirit of service has been alive and well in TCS. Our small schools provides opportunities for students and staff to engage in acts of service and assistance in a variety of ways. Whether it's maintaining a clean environment, fixing something that's broken, trouble-shooting technology, keeping the birdfeeders full, or moving chairs and tables in the APR, each act of service reflects our supportive and collaborative community. Perhaps there's no better staff example of service than Mr. Fredericks or, as we often refer to him, our "All-Star Volunteer." Mr. Fredericks, an Air-Force veteran, has been responsible for fixing so many things around the school, it almost seems like nothing fails anymore because he fixes it before it does! Whether it's building a door for the school play, painting picnic tables, or hanging something on your classroom wall, Mr. Fredericks is a man of many tools and ideas. His work has undoubtedly kept our school safer, more attractive, and more functional over the years. And he asks for nothing in return, although we praise him as often as we can.

Mr. Frederick's example of service sets a high bar for our students and there are numerous examples of students following his lead. Mikey leads our "flag crew" in the morning and afternoons – raising and lowering the flag and folding it properly every day. He has been assisted by Umar and William. Mikey told me, "For other schools, they don't have students doing that. It shows that there are students who respect it. It shows our community and how good we are." He then added, "When Umar and I are out there, some people will drive by and honk their horns at us, which is cool."

LeSabien has also become our designated chair-setter-upper in the APR because he arrives before any other students in the morning. "I like helping. It feels good to do it and it gives me something to do," he told me. LeSabien's assistance has been helpful for large gatherings, assemblies, and other events. He is often assisted by several students, especially when we need large tables set up. He said, "It's setting an example for the younger kids, even without being asked. Just to go on and do it." When asked what it says about the school that we allow students to have jobs like this, he replied, "The school trusts students enough to give them responsibilities and jobs."

Whether it's flag duty, setting up chairs and tables, or lunch-room cleanup, these acts of service help our students feel part of the larger community. Too often, students feel like they "don't belong" or are not a part of their school. When students have the opportunity for ownership in a school, however small, they often feel useful and important. That is what we strive for here at TCS. To those who continue to serve the TCS community, even in the smallest of ways, we salute you.



# Community Service: Food Drive & Color Some Kindness

By: Ms. Cuff



Throughout March, our school community came together for a service project in partnership with the Chester County Food Bank. Thanks to the generosity of our families and staff, we collected over 100 food items totaling 132 pounds to support local individuals and families in need!

The drive concluded with our *"Color Some Kindness"* event on March 25th, where students, and even some staff members, decorated cardboard boxes that will be used to deliver food to senior citizens throughout Chester County. The goal of this activity was to add a personal, uplifting touch to each delivery. A kind message, cheerful food pun, or a drawing can go a long way in brightening someone's day and helping reduce the stigma that can sometimes be associated with food insecurity. We also learned that CCFB delivers over 800 boxes of food a month! A special thank you to our partners at the Chester County Food Bank, and especially to Lisa and Donna, for visiting our school and helping make this experience so meaningful for our students.

This project was a powerful reminder of the importance of community service and the impact even small acts of kindness can have. Our students not only contributed to a larger cause, but also had the opportunity to practice creativity, empathy and giving back to their community!



# Transitions and Functional Strategies

By: Ms. Cuff



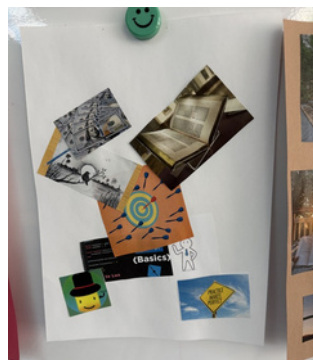
## Transitions Class

Transitions students recently wrapped up their budget projects and have now begun building hands-on life skills in the kitchen. So far, students have practiced making bacon and omelettes, as well as safely chopping vegetables to prepare fresh guacamole. This new unit is a fun and engaging way to promote independence and confidence in everyday tasks!



## Functional Strategies Class

Students in Functional Strategies have been exploring goal setting and how to stay motivated and organized. As part of this, they created vision boards to represent a personal goal. Students learned how vision boards can serve as a helpful visual reminder, supporting motivation, focus, and organization as they work toward achieving their goals.



Don't forget to check our Transition site for resources, community service opportunities, and more!

# Literature, Creative Writing, and More!

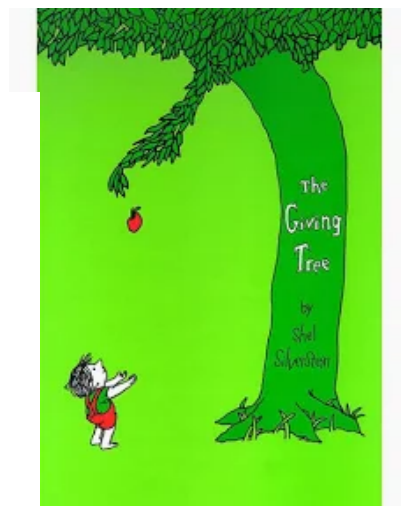
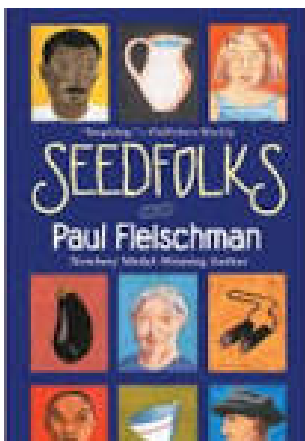
Mrs. Griffith

Mrs. Griffith's first period Literature class completed their Steinbeck unit with the novella *The Pearl*. Wow. Greed, corruption, systemic oppression, privilege, and Aristotle's tragic hero...we covered it all and our eyes were opened. Using their own Mice essays as models, students are writing a persuasive Pearl essay, independently.

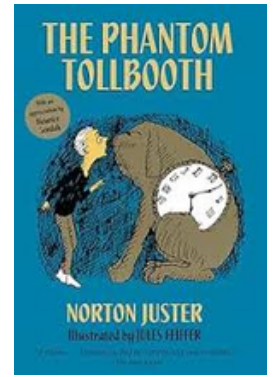
*The Great Gatsby* is next on tap where we will look at the "green light at the end of the dock" as we learn about the American Dream, human perseverance, and the future receding before us.



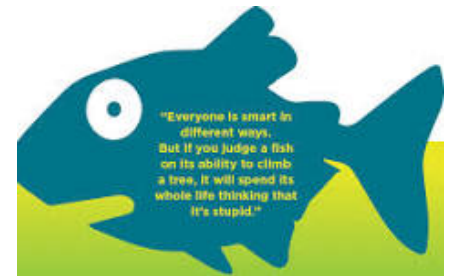
Second Period completed their unit on *The Wish Tree* by returning to Shel Silverstein's *The Giving Tree*. Selfishness vs. selflessness and unconditional love were big topics that led them to writing and illustrating their own children's book about something they love with all their hearts! Our new novel study is *Seedfolks*; we will reinforce our knowledge of community, diversity, growth, and connection. We will plant some seeds of our own and watch what grows! (We are still awaiting all the copies of the much anticipated sequel to *Sleeping Freshmen Never Lie: Sophomores and Other Oxymorons!*)



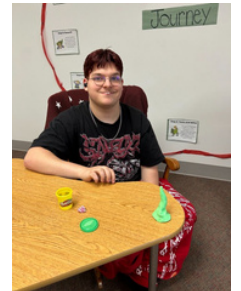
Third Period is having a blast with *The Phantom Tollbooth*. Puns, wordplay, absurd adventures and a lot of laughter and theorizing make reading this gem so much fun! Eating letter-shaped cookies, creating sound effects, and character voice coaching whilst reading on yoga balls are just a few of the activities happening with Milo and Tock on their hero's journey!



Fourth Period completed the fantastic *Fish in a Tree*! This inclusive, based-on-real-experiences, novel about learning differences helped us feel less alone. We all saw ourselves in the characters and found that we ALL have strengths and the ability to get to the same destination via multiple avenues! Kids are experimenting with a Canva presentation to flex their understanding. Next up...Jason Reynolds' novel-in-verse *Long Way Down* followed by *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*.



Creative Writers are on fire extending metaphors, writing "I Am" and "I Am From" poems, dwelling in "Maker Space" as play-doh meets writing, and enjoying discovering their own voices. Fourth marking period will find us working toward the opus that is the multi-genre project. Guess what? Your kids ARE writers!



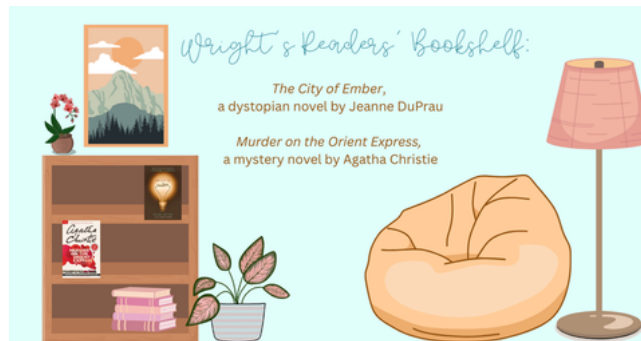
Theater is enjoying read-throughs of our upcoming Spring play which will be staged at the Arts Festival! Additionally, TCS was lucky enough to have Hedgerow Theater workshop with our school for several days. We deconstructed *Macbeth*, played "Whose Line?" and, fortunately, demystified stage blood. The school experienced the one-man show *I, Banquo* at the theater...and did some acting of their own on the banks of Ridley Creek!



# Literature, Theatre, and More!

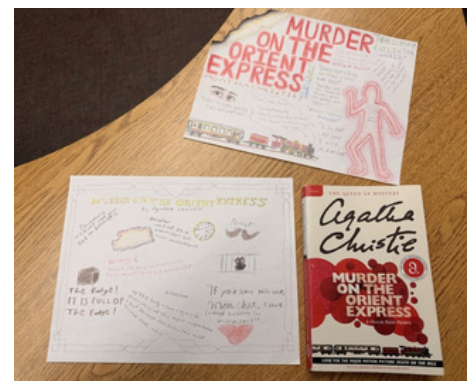
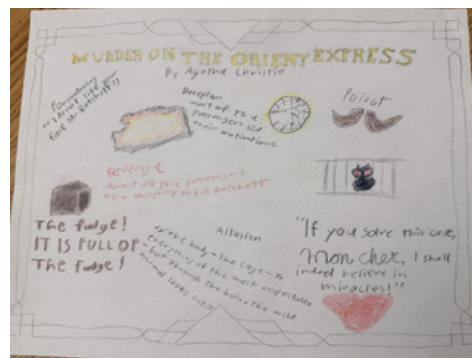
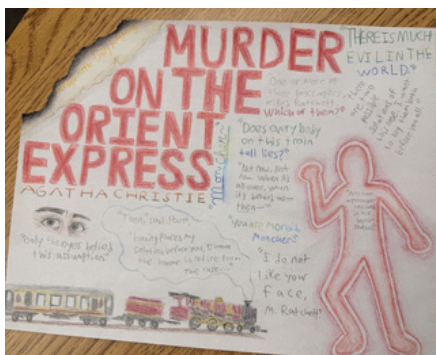
Mrs. Wright

What wonderful literary journeys we have taken during this marking period! In 2nd and 4th periods, we have immersed ourselves into the dystopian city, Ember, following the main character duo, Lina and Doon, in their fight to find a better world outside of the only place they have ever called home. Throughout this literature unit, students have been focusing on content vocabulary building, the author's use of a dystopia, author's use of internal and external conflict, and figurative language that's woven into the story of Ember.



3rd and 5th periods have exercised their deductive reasoning to help International Detective Hercule Poirot solve a murder on an isolated train in what was known as Yugoslavia at the time. 3rd Period has watched the 2017 film version of the novel, and had great fun picking apart the similarities and differences between the two medias. 5th Period will do the same once reading of the novel and the solving of the crime concludes!

3rd Period students, K and Lucas created "one-pagers" analyzing, through a literary lens, Agatha Christie's novel, Murder on the Orient Express. Look at their amazing works of art!



# Theatre Spotlight

Our entire school took a trip to Hedgerow Theater in Rose Valley (Media) just a few short weeks ago to see a unique production of Shakespeare's MacBeth, called I, Banquo. The one-man production featured the story of MacBeth through the death and grave of his best friend, Banquo, and featured a young electric guitarist whose riffs heightened the suspense and drama of the play. Previously, two actors/educators from the Hedgerow Theater came to teach us about the story of their version of the play as well as staging choices.



# Up Next for our troupe?

Our theater troupe is preparing for our production for Ms. Schwind's Springs Arts Festival! We are back on the stage working on scenes and memorizing lines. We can't wait to show you what we have been working on!  
It's inconceivable!



# History of Classic Cinema

Ms. Tilmon & Mr. Burtch

## Classic Cinema Update

The Classic Cinema class has continued its exploration of iconic musical cinema from the classic era (and beyond). In this marking period, the class studied *Top Hat* (1935), *Cabin in the Sky* (1943), *An American in Paris* (1951) and *A Hard Day's Night* (1964):

*Top Hat* (1935) is one of the best examples of Depression-era musical cinema and showcases the talents of Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers.

*Cabin in the Sky* (1943) is an African-American musical that features an All-Star cast including Ethel Waters (from Chester, PA), Eddie "Rochester" Anderson, Lena Horne, Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington.

*An American in Paris* (1951) stars Gene Kelly and Leslie Caron and features music by George and Ira Gershwin. The movie showcases Gene Kelly's acting and dancing talent at its best.

*A Hard Day's Night* (1964) is a departure from classic American musicals of the big studio era. Instead, it was made in the U.K. and showcases the Beatles at the height of Beatlemania in a cinematic format that seems fresh compared to earlier Rock "n" Roll movies, and portends music videos of the future.



# Math

Mr. Burtch

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This marking period has seen students working on a wide range of math topics ranging from building basic math skills, basic geometry and exploration of functions. Several students have pushed beyond and worked on imaginary numbers in Precalculus and important concepts in Differential Calculus.

Students continue to win delicious, fruit flavored Jarritos sodas. Yum.  
Include some photos of Jarritos.



# American Geography

Mrs. Culler

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Mrs. Culler's Honors Geography spent a wonderful quarter in Germany, France, Spain, and Italy, while American Geography enjoyed the Southeast, the Midwest, and just reached the Southwest. Students created impressive brochures on National Parks in the Southeast like Mammoth Cave and Dry Tortugas, while the European Geography class created a group diorama on the Iberian Peninsula and tried their hand at making churros.

# Life Science

Mrs. Culler

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In science, students in Life Science I have been learning all about plants and the functions of roots, stems, and leaves, including some amazing scientific illustrations of the layers of a leaf and the process of photosynthesis, and hands-on experiments that look at how taproots and fibrous roots work to transport water throughout the plant. Life Science II just wrapped up their unit on Reptiles with slideshows of turtles, lizards, and snakes that are native to PA. Next up, birds and mammals.

Picklepuff, the smallest resident mammal on staff wishes everyone a beautiful spring!

## What is a reptile?

A reptile is a type of vertebrate animal (an animal with a backbone) that usually has dry, scaly skin, breathes with lungs, and is cold-blooded, meaning its body temperature depends on the environment. Most reptiles lay eggs on land.



# Family and Consumer Science

Mrs. Culler

Mrs. Culler's Family and Consumer Science Class has been working hard in this third quarter, expanding our skills in crochet, cooking, and working on projects that take the various areas of financial math, budgeting, cooking, nutrition, and meal planning that we've studied and bring them together.

This quarter all the students made crocheted birds using the Woobles pattern for Pierre the Penguin, but experimented with different colors to create parrots, cardinals, blue birds, and more. In the kitchen, we expanded our recipes to focus on nutritious meals that combine proteins, veggies, and various phytonutrients like bulgogi and ham and bean soup, as well items that are fun like banana pudding and chocolate bark. Students also helped with a TCS outreach by making two hundred chocolate covered pretzels to distribute to local pediatricians! Students also reviewed the basics that we learned earlier in the year, like biscuits, flatbreads, and our go-to - eggs.

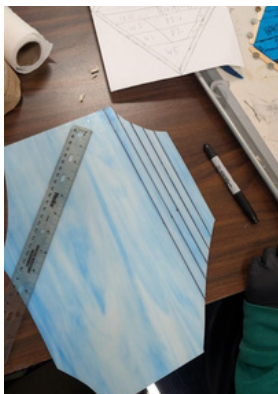
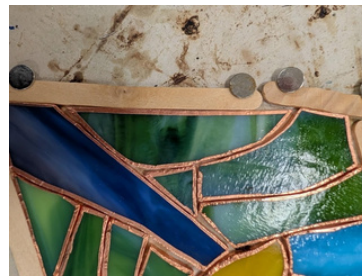
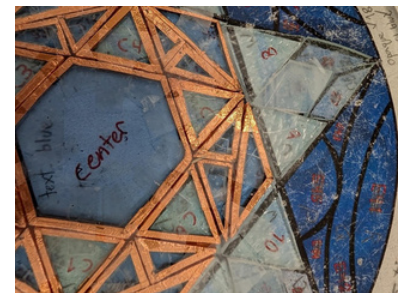
For our end of quarter project, students had to use their knowledge to do some real-world planning and create a week's worth of balanced, nutritious meals that still fit their personal preferences by comparison shopping, budgeting, and meal planning. Students had to bring in their week of 21 different menus with a strict budget, and everyone met their goal. The meal planning sheet is attached in the newsletter if you'd like your students to practice this important skill.



# Stained Glass

Mrs. Daniels

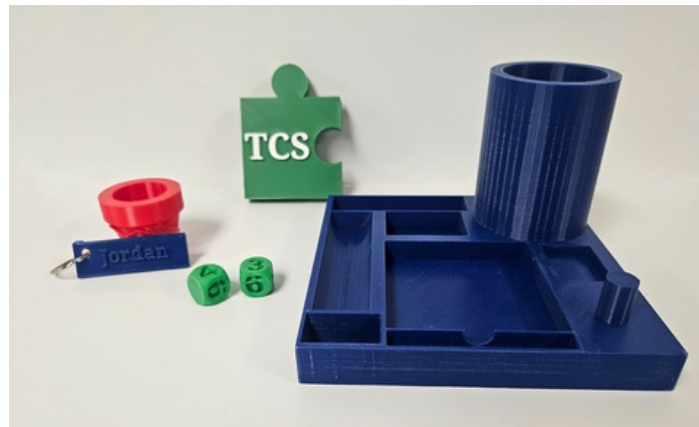
I couldn't be more proud of the amazing work that our Stained Glass class has put into their creations this Spring! As you may remember, we had learned all about the history of stained glass through the ages, ending with the early twentieth century's hard lean towards representational designs. At this point, our class began work on individual representational projects. Each student created three possible designs, compared them to each other and chose their favorite one to see through to completion. This meant they had to turn their design into a pattern, choose the glass they wanted to use for each pattern piece, cut and grind that glass into exactly the shapes they need, wrap and burnish each individual piece with copper tape, design a mechanism for hanging their piece, solder everything together, and finally polish and apply patina to the finished product. This incredibly detailed multi-step process has required tremendous focus, energy, and care from each student. Each project consists of between 20 - 75 individual pieces of glass all assembled into one gorgeous creation. All the while, the whole class has been working on our Class Project, which gets more beautiful by the day. I am so impressed with the diligence and focus that each of these students has applied to their work this year, and I cannot wait for you all to see it in person at the Art Show! Here are just a few pictures of the process to whet your appetite for more:



# Photography

Mrs. Fredericks

Mrs. Fredericks's 3D printing classes are learning how to create 3D prints using Tinkercad cad program, which is an introductory application. We started with tutorials and a basic project creating keychains. Since then we have created dice, tealight holders, cookie cutters, magnetic "puzzle" piece with text, and a major project creating a desktop organizer.

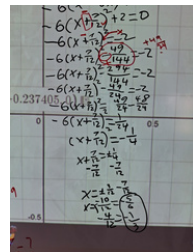
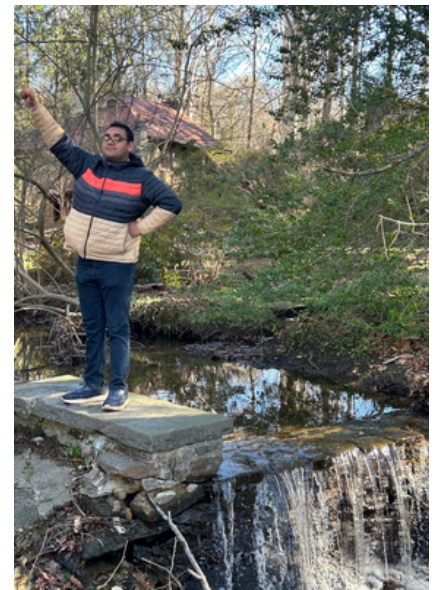


Mrs. Fredericks's Pixar class studied how Pixar creates movies during the first half of the year, along with creating our own stories following the lessons learned in Pixar. This semester we're taking the stories they created and learning how to animate them using ToonSquid on the iPads.



Mrs. Fredericks's photography class has been studying the "exposure triangle," consisting of aperture, ISO, and shutter priority, and the importance of each. Photography 2 students are taking the basics and going further, for example, when we learned aperture, the Photography 2 students learned about "Bokeh," among other aspects of Photography. Students are also learning about white balance, and how the light changes in different settings and how to adjust this in camera. Students are editing these images in Adobe Photoshop Elements, which is a stand-alone program rather than the subscription-based Photoshop. We will work on some fun creative ideas in Photoshop soon.





## TRIP TO FORT MIFFLIN

On February 19, TCS made a field trip to Fort Mifflin, "The Fort that Saved America". Fort Mifflin is situated on Mud Island, near the junction of the Schuylkill and Delaware Rivers. It also is very close to the main runways of the Philadelphia International Airport (many large aircraft passed overhead during our visit).

The fort was built in 1771, just before the beginning of the Revolutionary War. It has served America in conflicts including the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, WWI, WW2 and the Korean Conflict. It was decommissioned in 1962. The Fort earned its nickname by holding off the British fleet (enroute to siege Philadelphia), allowing time for the Continental Army to escape to the winter encampment at Valley Forge.

Our group was led by a seasoned senior tour guide, Miss Mary, through the history of the Fort and macabre aspects of its past. In addition to being very historic, Fort Mifflin also is well known and documented for extensive paranormal activities. The TCS group walked through the buildings and across the soggy grounds (it is Mud Island) to see the sights. Students seemed to really enjoy the experience. The group listened well and asked many good questions.

Upon returning to TCS, the school watched two documentary videos on Fort Mifflin and its paranormal reputation. One video even included our tour guide, Miss Mary! Huzzah!



# CURLING PRESENTATION

On Thursday, February 5, TCS was thrilled to welcome Carolyn Lloyd from The Philadelphia Curling Club (<https://philadelphiacurlingclub.org/>) for a day of informative and fun curling instruction. Ms. Lloyd began with a school-wide assembly, teaching us all about the sport of curling. Through an interactive presentation blending hands-on exploration of curling equipment with lively discussion, we learned about the rules, techniques, and even the Olympic history of this fascinating sport. Over the remainder of the day, Ms. Lloyd met with small groups of 4-8 students for hands-on mini-games of floor curling, emphasizing the importance of good sportsmanship, support, and camaraderie. As Ms. Lloyd so eloquently put it: "In curling, either you win, or you learn." We are so grateful to Ms. Lloyd for her time and energy, and very much look forward to the possibility of future curling adventures!



## Student Highlights

Third Quarter Honor Roll  
& Outstanding Citizenship

Mikey

Perfect Attendance

Payton  
Mikey  
Emily



# Turn Your Taxes Into Student Scholarships ■

A simple, family-friendly way to support The Concept School

Did you know you can support students at The Concept School using money you already pay in taxes? Pennsylvania's EITC program makes it easy to give back—without increasing your out-of-pocket cost.

**\$10,000 donation → up to \$9,000 back in PA taxes**  
Most families pay very little (or nothing extra) to participate.

**■ Did You Know?**

- Many families already qualify to participate
- You can often use money you already owe in taxes
- It's one of the easiest ways to make a BIG impact
- You're helping students access a school that truly supports them

<b>■ What is EITC?</b> A state program that lets you redirect your taxes to student scholarships.	<b>♥■ Why families love it</b> It helps more students attend Concept while making a real impact.
<b>■■■■■ Who can do this?</b> Many families qualify through a simple group (called an SPE).	<b>■ How it works</b> Join → contribute → receive tax credit → help students.

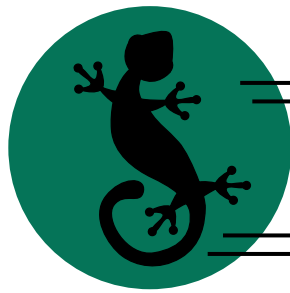
## ■ *Easy ways families participate*

- Use part of your PA taxes
- Use a tax refund
- Join with other families
- Participate through a family financial plan

### **Not sure if this applies to you?**

That's okay—we'll walk you through it step-by-step. It's easier than it sounds!

***Let's make it easy to support our students.  
Contact us to learn more.***



## What's Next at TCS...



No School-  
Primary Election Day



End of the Year Dance



Spring Arts Festival



Awards Day,  
Noon Dismissal



No School- Memorial Day



Graduation Day,  
Noon Dismissal



Last Day of School,  
Noon Dismissal

## Follow TCS

@theconceptschoo1972



Our school's Instagram is monitored to ensure a safe and positive space. We ask that students engage respectfully and appropriately with all content.



Our school's Facebook is monitored to ensure a safe and positive space. We ask that students engage respectfully and appropriately with all content.