



Kite and Leaf...

The good news
email from TCS!

Reflections on Achieving a Milestone

For many years, the prospect of reaching full enrollment at TCS seemed like a faraway dream. We were committed to keeping our class sizes small, but often had classrooms with fewer students. So much of our earnest discussion in board and faculty meetings over the years included "how can we reach full enrollment?" or "we can't do that unless we reach full enrollment!"

As often happens with the fondest of dreams, while we were so busy these last few years, the dream snuck up on us. We are currently as close to full enrollment as we can reasonably expect to be, although the final numbers may be just 1 or 2 students short.

Completely full enrollment is tough to pin down because of last-minute changes in family plans like unexpected moves and fluctuations on our waiting lists. But we are within reach, and it feels great.

How did we get here?



Pond students release trout into Lake Michigan after watching them hatch from eggs and grow throughout the year in hatchery aquariums set up by middle-level students.

We looked for ways to get our name, our mission, and the advantages of a progressive education out to nearby communities. We expanded our outreach to prospective new families by creating virtual info sessions. We fortified our financial aid to help families meet the costs of our tuition and fees, especially during Covid through the help of our Families Fund. We listened to input from parents and alumni and used it to keep improving our programs and policies.

Unlike other schools, we don't spend very much on marketing. Our best advertisements are our parents sharing with their friends and neighbors; the example set by our wonderful students who are so delightful, curious, and kind; our amazing graduates who are doing such impressive and creative things all over the world; and everyone who has been touched by TCS in some way and now raves about our dynamic and talented faculty, our project-based learning, and our supportive school community.



Students rehearse for their pirate musical in music class.

The new challenge? Just as we thought, strong enrollment expands our possibilities and has us dreaming of new goals. Better yet, it frees up even more of our attention for long-standing goals that include more learning opportunities for our students, new ways to expand the diversity within our student body and improve educational equity, strengthening the connections among our families and with our community at large, and better ways to support our faculty and staff.

To everyone who helped us reach this milestone on our school's journey, thank you. We hope you will continue to be great ambassadors for progressive education, just as we hope to continue providing an outstanding model of it.

Summer Programming a Success!

Speaking of milestones, 2022 is the year TCS stepped forward to reach another milestone by launching summer programming, and we love it!

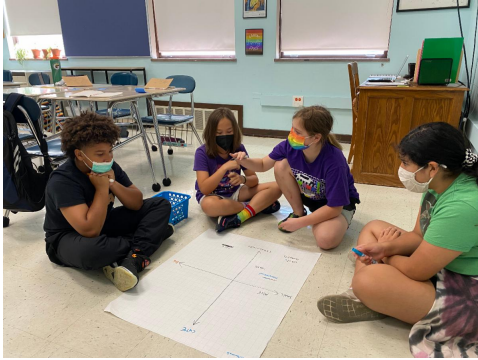
Summer programming not only provides fun options for kids during the summer, but it takes advantage of our wonderful facility year-round and keeps it full of life, learning, and the laughter of children.

In addition to our upcoming Multi-Arts Camp led by artists from Chicago Danztheatre (who also supervise our afterschool Kid's Project program), we hosted a specialized reading camp this summer led by our learning specialist, Ms. Kristen McShane, and her crew.

Right now, our middle-level math camp is underway, and camp leaders Ms. Gloria Mitchell and Ms. Mika Yamamoto chronicle each day with newsletters to participating families full of photos and descriptions of each day's math challenges and games.

Read a sample of the camp's daily "Math News"

Below are some photos of our Math Camp in action:



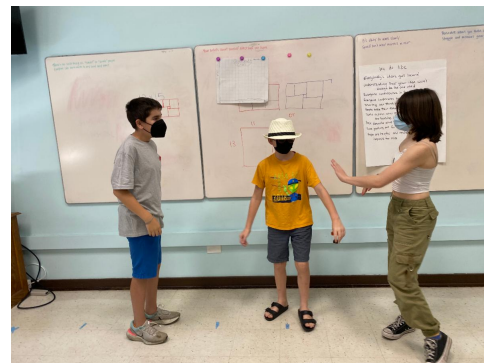
Campers studied graphs showing bivariate data. They chose their topic, decided on their variables, and advocated for the placement of each data point. They practiced their graphing, reasoning, justification, and group work skills.



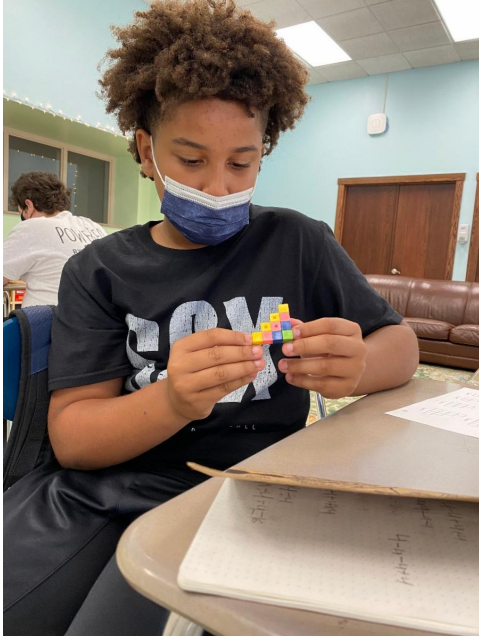
What does a mathematician look like? When young people were asked this question in an experiment, they depicted an older white man with crazy hair (like Einstein) and a lab coat. Students considered: Where do these stereotypes come from? What harm do these stereotypes do?



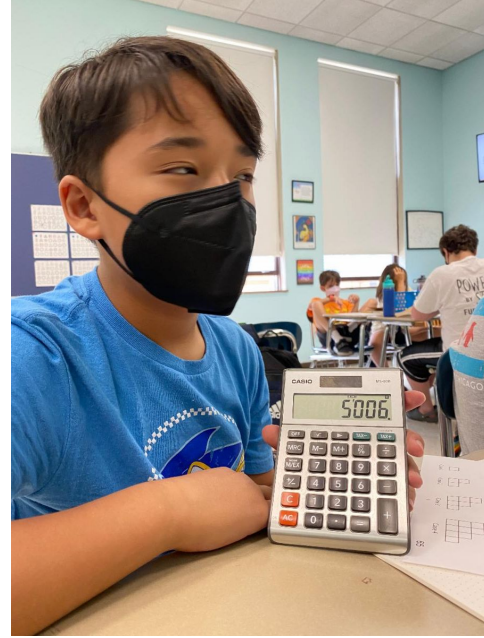
Students spent a day analyzing visual patterns in shape tasks, constructing and looking for algebraic representations in various shape displays.



Groups created and told a story about and through a graph they'd designed together and presented it to the whole group. The stories were extremely funny!



A "squares to stairs" activity requires deep thinking in order to connect geometric thinking with algebraic equations.



It's fun when you can find the answer to a visual equation using a calculator, even better when you know the concepts to help translate what you see into a numerical strategy.

The Children's School in ONE WORD!

At the end of the school year, we sent out 2 surveys: one to our current parents, and another to alumni. In those surveys, we asked respondents to think of one word that described a TCS education. The winning words among parents were "Holistic" and "Open". Among the alumni and alumni parents' side, the most frequently used words were "Empowering" and "Whole."



Here are more words our community chose to best describe us:

Current Parents Said:

Holistic
Open
Playful
Engaged
Progressive
Inclusive
Dedicated
Affirming
Adaptive
Full-Bodied
Transformative
Experimental
Incredible
Empowering
Amazing
Differentiated
Unique
Comprehensive
Special
Rousseauistic
Dynamic

Alumni & Alumni Parents Said:

Empowering
Whole
Holistic
Community
Thoughtful
Collaborative
Self-Advocacy
Personalized
Experiential
Valuable
Stimulating



[CLICK HERE](#)
for an updated pdf of our 2022-23
ACADEMIC CALENDAR

