

The Vision



Partnering with Parents

By Scott Phillips, Executive Director

What exactly does it mean when TPS says that “we partner with parents” for the education of their children?

In short, it is a philosophical statement regarding the way we as educators view our roles in the lives of your children. We understand that it is you, as parents, who are ultimately responsible for the management of your children’s education and we, the staff of TPS, are here to help you in your endeavor.

Personally, I began to formulate this position regarding education a number of years ago when I was still litigating civil rights cases. As a result of my work I was asked to participate in a panel discussion on civil rights in education at the annual Nebraska State Board of Education conference. I was on one end of the panel and a gentleman representing the state’s department of education was on another. Towards the end of the debate the gentleman made a statement that I have never forgotten: “Between the hours of eight and three, those children are ours.”

Needless to say, I was taken aback. I immediately stood up to challenge his statement citing numerous constitutional Supreme Court decisions. Despite this, he

would not budge. It was his basic belief that children belonged to the school during the school day.

That is not to say that all school officials take such a stance. Quite to the contrary, many do not. But, there has been a shift over the course of the past few decades that seems to suggest that schools indeed are in charge of almost all aspects of a child’s life without the involvement of parents. In making such a shift, parents have been robbed of one of the true joys in parenting — being responsible for the moral and academic growth of their children.

A 2001 article entitled “**Parents, not schools, must ultimately be responsible for children**” - by Lori Yaklin of the Mackinac Center for Public Policy—ties the lack of student achievement in schools to the diminishment of the parent’s role in the child’s life perpetuated by the educational system. Yaklin ends her article with this, “The end result of the schools’ increased responsibilities is a culture in which parents become accountable to the schools, rather than the schools being accountable to parents . . . We must ask ourselves if we should expect schools to become one-stop shops

for all of a child’s needs. . . Should we encourage parents to transfer their responsibilities to government officials? It could be that the United States will not see a rise in academic achievement until the roles of parents and schools are once again properly aligned.”



It is for this reason that TPS holds to the philosophy that we “partner” with parents as opposed to assuming an abdicated parental role.

We understand that parents have asked us to help by providing a strong classical academic program built on a foundation of virtue, and we absolutely enjoy doing so.

We also understand that parents have not asked us to raise their children for them and we do not intend to do so.

Ultimately, we hold to this philosophy because we have consistently seen and firmly believe that our highest performing students are those whose parents have fully shouldered the responsibility of ensuring that education is taking place in their children’s lives and virtue is being lived out on a daily basis.

Highlighting Virtue:

- The greater person is the one of courtesy.
Lord Alfred Tennyson
- Govern thyself and you will be able to govern the world.
Source Unknown



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Second Quarter Virtue:
PRUDENCE

From the President . . .

TPS Families and Friends;

It is difficult for me to believe that we have already completed the first quarter of the 08/09 school year. The routine at the Beggs household is firmly established, we have the commute managed and my son is able to find his tie Monday mornings. A brilliant beginning! I am so pleased that the excitement and passion that opened the school year are thriving and I know will carry us through to June on a wave of achievement and success.

The Board of Directors is blossoming under its new structure and the partnership with school administration seems to be a great success. Though how could it possibly be otherwise with these magnificent professionals on duty? We all are very optimistic.

I do feel obligated, once again, to offer this reminder: As you well know, we are a public school strictly bound to comply with state and federally mandated standards and requirements. That said, *as a charter school we receive fewer dollars from the state than other public schools.* Yes, we must provide the same services and resources *without the same revenue sources.* We therefore need every dollar we can keep especially in this time of financial uncertainty.



I am urging you to please reconsider 'elective absences'. Admittedly, we have all considered this at one time or another. Are the ski slopes calling? Is the beach beckoning? Are you taking the kids to Disneyland midweek to avoid the crowds? If so, I hope you might reconsider or consider making a

donation to our operating fund. In California, under a formula that dates to the 1930s, how much a school receives in tax dollars is based on how many students are in class on any given day. We basically get paid for attendance. That's right: **if your child is absent we lose up to \$40.00!** That money pays salaries, keeps the air conditioning, water, and phones operating; it is how we stay open for business. If you have two children out for two days that is \$160.00 we lose toward our bills and obligations.

Please consider writing a check to help defray the losses suffered. Remember, we are a 501C(3). Your donation is tax deductible.

Lisa Beggs, President
TPS Governing Board of Directors

Evidence of Virtue

We talk a lot about virtue here at TPS. In fact, that is one of the primary reasons we do what we do here — to teach students what virtue lived out needs to look like, sound like and feel like.

With that in mind, I would like to share a recent letter we received from one of our vendors — *Juice It Up*. As you may have noticed once or twice a week, *Juice It Up* is selling smoothies out in the parking lot to help us raise funds for our athletic department.

This is what *Juice It Up* had to say about our

students — your children:

Dear Mr. Phillips,

It is not often in our very busy lives that we take notice of the positive things we encounter each day. Well, this is one of those instances that we at Juice It Up want to share with you and your teaching community.

As you know, we have been serving the parents and students at TPS with smoothies. It is our pleasure to inform you that we consider you students to be among the best.

They have been most gracious. They have smiles on their faces, are very polite, and honest. It is our pleasure to serve them.

Your students exemplify all the pillars of "Character Counts".

*Tim & Charye Sweeney
Juice It Up, French Valley*

It is always great as a parent here at TPS to have something tangible to look to when you are wondering if all the sacrifice is worth it. Just so you know, it is!

Your students exemplify
all the pillars of
"Character Counts"

Did You Know . . .

That on October 15th:

1860 Eleven-year-old Grace Bedell of Westfield, N.Y., wrote a letter to presidential candidate Abraham Lincoln, suggesting he could improve his appearance by growing a beard.

1951 *I Love Lucy*, starring Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz, had its television debut.

1964 It was announced that Nikita Khrushchev was removed from his positions as premier and secretary of the Communist Party of the USSR.

1966 The U.S. Department of Transportation was created.

1989 Wayne Gretzky topped Gordie Howe's NHL scoring record.

1991 Clarence Thomas got a narrow (52–48) Senate confirmation of his nomination to the Supreme Court.

1993 Nelson Mandela and F. W. de Klerk were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for their work to end apartheid in South Africa.

2003 China became the third country to launch a staffed space mission.