



New Family FAQ

General Information

What is the School's Academic Calendar?

- The school year runs from September 5, 2018 to June 14, 2019. See the online calendar for details. tcslj.org/events

What are some ways I can meet families in my child's grade before school starts?

- Meet your Mentor Family: All new families are paired with a Mentor Family who will contact you over the summer to answer any questions.
- Attend a social: Current TCS families often arrange grade level summer gatherings and play dates in a park. Additionally, TCS hosts a New Family Social on August 30 at 5:00 pm.

What can a family expect in the first six weeks of school?

- During the first six weeks of school, teachers will emphasize community building within the classroom.
- The Parent Association typically hosts a Welcome Breakfast and Parent Social.
- Back-to-School Nights are held during the second week of school and provide an opportunity to meet your children's teachers and to hear an overview of the classroom curriculum. Attendance by all parents is highly encouraged. Kids' Club is available by reservation; email activities@tcslj.org to reserve your child's spot.

What are the drop off/pick up procedures at TCS?

- Every division (grade level) has a specific drop off time and procedure.
 - Preschool: Parent walks child into school to drop off between 8:30-9:00 am at the Preschool playground. Half-day pick up is from 12:00-12:15 pm and full-day pick up is from 3:00-3:15 pm in the classroom.
 - Prekindergarten: Parent walks child into school for drop off between 8:15-8:30 am. Pick-up is between 2:45-3:15 pm on the playground.

- Kindergarten: Parent walks child into school for drop off between 8:15-8:30 am. Pick-up is between 3:00-3:15 pm in the classroom.
- First through Fifth Grade: Parents can either walk students into the classroom between 8:15-8:30 am or drop them off curbside at the front gate between 8:00-8:30 with a TCS Administrator present. Children will be supervised on the playground between 8:00-8:15 am. At 8:15 am, children will go to their classrooms. Pick up is between 3:00-3:15 pm in the classroom.
- Sixth through Eighth Grade: Children are dropped off curbside at the middle school gate between 7:45-8:00 am with a TCS Administrator present. Pick up is between 3:00-3:15 pm in the NMY Courtyard.

What is parking like at pick up and drop off?

- TCS has parking in designated spots in the parking lot, as well as curbside on Torrey Pines Lane. Parking in the middle of the cul-de-sac is not encouraged due to congestion and pedestrian safety.
- Most grades have staggered drop off times, which helps alleviate congestion. The 3:00 pm pick-up time can be quite busy, so we encourage parents to plan accordingly and be patient.

Is there before-school and after-school care?

- Kids' Club (KC) is our extended care program for students in Preschool - Eighth grade, and opens at 7:00 am. The Kids' Club staff will walk children to class at the appropriate start time. After school, KC is available from 3:15-6:00 pm. Parents can utilize Kids' Club on an unlimited basis for an annual fee or on a drop-in basis as needed. For those families who only need to use Kids' Club services occasionally, parents will be billed on an ongoing basis at \$10 per hour and billed in 15 minute increments. tcslj.org/kidsclub
- Third through Eighth grade students in Kids' Club from 3:15-4:15 pm will be encouraged to work on their homework; children are assisted with homework by Kids' Club staff.

What extracurricular activities are available? Is there a cost?

The following afterschool programs are available at TCS for a fee:

- Afterschool enrichment classes. These begin at 3:15 pm. There are three sessions offered during the fall, winter, and spring for all grade levels. Enrichment offerings change depending on interests and availability. For the most current offerings, please see the TCS website: <https://tcslj.org/enrichment>.
- Intramural Athletics: Open to Fifth through Eighth grade students from 3:15-4:30 pm depending on season and sport offered. tcslj.org/athletics
- Dance Classes: TCS partners with The Dance Academy, which offers after school dance classes on campus. tcslj.org/dance

What is the lunch program at TCS?

- Students may bring their own snacks and lunches to school. An optional hot lunch program is available to Preschool through Eighth grade students through an outside vendor: Ki's School Lunch Program. All orders are done online at kis.naturallunches.com.

How can I get information regarding food choices for snack, lunches, birthday and classroom celebrations?

- TCS encourages healthy food choices for students in the classroom. The TCS Family Handbook includes suggestions for community snacks and treats as well as the School's nutritional policy. Toddler through Kindergarten classrooms are nut-free. bit.ly/2018TCSHandbook
- You may also check with your classroom teacher regarding preferred birthday celebrations and snack choices, which will likely be discussed at Back-to-School Night.

What are the important community-building events at TCS?

- New Family Social (August 30)
- Back-to-School Night (September 11 or 13, depending on student grade)
- Pizza Social (September 28)
- Cocktails & Conversation (October 6)
- Fall Festival (October 21)
- TCS Walkabout (November 8)
- PA Holiday Celebration (December 7)
- Winter Sing (February 14)
- Great Artist Grande Finale (April 11)
- Fun Night (May 11)
- Spring Sing (May 17)

Is the Family Handbook on the website?

- Yes, the handbook is available on the TCS website at tcslj.org/parents.

How do I get my school gate code at the beginning of the year?

- At the beginning of the year, each new family must sign for their gate code information. The code remains the same until your child graduates.
- Gate codes will be available at the New Family Social on August 30, or from the main office once school starts.

If my child is going to be absent or needs to leave early, whom do I notify?

- Please notify administration in the TCS office at 858-454-0184 or info@tcslj.org.
- Emailing your child's teacher with the type of illness, if applicable, is also appreciated.

What is the electronics policy for students?

- Students are encouraged to keep cell phones and all electronics at home or in their backpack during school hours. If a child needs to contact his or her parent, he/she is advised to do so by using the phone in TCS Main Office.

What is the homework policy at TCS?

- TCS believes that homework should be relevant and meaningful. Homework begins in First grade, and the amount of homework assigned depends upon the grade level. Homework for your child will be described more fully at Back-to-School Night. For more about TCS's homework policy, please refer to the Family Handbook. bit.ly/2018TCSHandbook

What are the volunteer opportunities for parents at TCS?

- There are many ways to get involved at TCS depending on one's availability and interest.
 - Get involved with the Parent Association (PA): Every parent is automatically a member of the PA, which helps to plan school events and functions such as Fall Festival, POPs lunch, Book Fair, Sock Hop, Read Across America Day, Fun Night (the annual gala) and more. Parents can get involved in many ways from planning, leading, hosting and organizing events. The PA has meetings several times a year.
 - Volunteer in your child's classroom: Classroom teachers will share opportunities for volunteering in the classroom at Back-to-School Night.
 - Share your talent at our various school-wide programs: Expertise in cooking, art, science, athletics and more is welcomed!
 - Volunteer as a chaperone on class field trips. Note: all parent chaperones and drivers need to be Live Scanned (background checked) at least two weeks prior to field trip.
 - Celebrate our community's diversity: Share your family's traditions and heritage in your child's classroom.

Early Childhood Program

- **Sneak-a-Peek Toddler - Kindergarten**
 - Held the Friday before school starts, **August 31, from 10-11:00 am**, parents and children can come see their classroom, meet the teachers and other students before school begins.
- **When is Preschool drop off?**
 - You may drop off your child as early as 8:30 am on the playground, as this is when teacher supervision begins. The day officially begins at 9:00 am when

children are called for meeting time and say goodbye to their parents.

- **What is the snack and lunch policy?**
 - The Toddler through Kindergarten classrooms are “nut-free”, so nothing made with or containing nuts is permitted in the classroom for the safety of all students.
 - Snacks are brought by parents on a volunteer basis
 - Lunches can be brought from home (nut-free) or hot lunch may be arranged through Ki’s: kis.naturallunches.com

- **Does my child need to nap in Preschool and Prekindergarten?**
 - Preschool has a nap period from 1-2:30 pm daily; if your child is not a napper, certain quiet activities are provided during resting time.
 - Prekindergarten has “peaceful” time for 45 minutes to an hour in the afternoon; audio stories are played for children to listen to during this time. Later in the year are books are offered for reading.

- **Can my student bring a toy to school?**
 - Your child may bring a small stuffed animal for rest time, to be kept in their cubby when not in use.

- **Does my child need to be potty trained before the Preschool year begins?**
 - Yes, your child must be fully potty trained prior to the start of Preschool. We have a no diaper/no pull-up policy in the Preschool program.

Toddler Program

- **What is the philosophy of the Toddler Program?**
 - Our Toddler Program is a play-based program with a rich, hands-on curriculum that focuses on social emotional skills. Parent participation and parent education are integral components of the program.
 - Recommended reading includes *The Whole Brain Child* by Daniel Siegel (Chapter 1-3)
 - *Connected Parenting* by Jennifer Kolari (Chapters 1-3, 8 & 9)

- **Is the Toddler Program Orientation meeting mandatory?**
 - Yes. The Toddler Program orientation takes place before school starts, on **Wednesday, August 29 at 5:00 pm**, in order to provide families with guidelines and resources before the first day of class.

- **Do toddlers need to be potty trained?**
 - No, toddlers participate with their parent and are not required to be potty trained. Potty training is reinforced in the classroom and parents are supported during the process.

- **What is the toddler's schedule?**
 - Classes begin at 9:00am and parents are encouraged to arrive on time so children may explore the classroom before morning meeting.
 - Class begins every morning with a morning greeting that helps front-load the children and create a nurturing classroom community.
 - Indoor/Outdoor play follows morning meeting. Mid-morning the students have snack in the classroom. Following snack, children gather and walk to the outside playground or Monkey Meadow with teachers and the parent worker.

- **What does the parent worker do while helping in the classroom?**
 - The parent worker role is assigned by the teacher and rotates from parent to parent. The parent worker brings snack for everyone, assists in the classroom while other parents are at parent education and engages in play with all children.

- **What can parents bring for classroom snack?**
 - The designated parent worker is responsible for bringing snack to class. The Toddler Program is a nut-free classroom and parents are encourage to bring healthy, whole foods appropriate for young children. Choices include: cut up fruit, finger foods such as veggies and hummus, veggie/rice crackers, unsweetened applesauce and yogurt. Please avoid foods such as popcorn, raw carrots, raisins (choking hazard), dessert items, soda and candy.

- **What happens during Toddler Parent Education meetings?**
 - Parents gradually separate from the children in classroom to meet for Parent Education. During these meetings, the role of the parent worker is discussed at length to assist parents in their role while helping in class. Parenting philosophies and strategies are also explored and discussed during these meetings.