

THE TCCS BOARD OF TRUSTEES IS
PROUD TO ANNOUNCE THE CANDIDATES
RUNNING TO FILL THE 3 VACANCIES FOR
THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES TERM OF
2023-2026

In alphabetical order:

STACY BEHARRY
YVETTE GONZALEZ
XIOMARA HADNOT
ANDREA SHUMAN

Please see their statements of interest below.

PLEASE BE SURE TO VIEW THE
CANDIDATES FORUM
VIA ZOOM
ON JUNE 5TH AT 7PM

BOARD ELECTION WILL BE HELD
ELECTRONICALLY ON JUNE 12TH

Position Statement

The conventional way of starting this statement would be by telling you all my name, my experience, why I feel I am able to fill this role, and how happy I am to be a candidate for the board of TCCS. While this would certainly tell you my qualifications, it wouldn't paint the picture of who I am, or why you should vote for me.

If asked to describe myself, the first words out of my mouth would be parent. This "job," easily the best one I have ever had, centers around ensuring my children understand the importance of happiness and self-worth. I serve as a guide, helping them grow into well-adjusted human beings who know the importance of being kind, and leading with respect. I use the term guide however, because they have taught me more about life than I could ever teach them. As a board member it is essential comprehend that every one of the children within our school community is one of ours and should be treated as such. Therefore, potential board members must ensure ways are being devised that provide opportunities for children to pursue interests, share their knowledge with us, explore outside their comfort zone, and to become independent thinkers who understand the importance of spreading positive values.

If asked to be more detailed, I would then go on to discuss my passion for equity, advocacy, and advancement. As an avid researcher who has led inquiries on topics such as school suspensions and failure rates, the disproportionate number of young brown and black girls who do not pursue STEM careers, as well as how high teacher turnover rates reduce quality instruction, the realization of how schools are failing children is alarming. It is essential that board members advocate for children. Policies surrounding positive behavioral guidance must be utilized. Opportunities that expose children to new experiences which promote inquiry and lead to long-term passions for their future must continue to be implemented. Board members must also work in congruence with teachers to ensure that high quality educational learning remains consistent and hands on. As relevant and controversial topics begin to surround our school system it is essential that board members assist in informing themselves, and then focus on making decisions that best support the mission of TCCS.

Lastly, as my third character trait, I would explain why being a part of the community of Teaneck is so important to me. Watching the town change and grow from my parents being the first brown people to move onto their street 45 years ago, to now being a part of a community that has grown and blended in culture and understanding, has truly been a privilege. I am proud that my children have walked on the same streets I have, played at the same parks, know that the best ice cream comes from Bischoffs, and have all attended Teaneck Schools. This understanding of our larger community, coupled with my understanding of the public, charter, and magnet schools in our area provides valuable insights about our educational system and the neighborhood as a whole. Board members should ensure they are remaining true to the needs of families, while supporting the well-

being of our children, and stay informed about local neighborhood resources that could benefit our school community.

My goals as a Board Member:

1. To ensure that TCCS remains committed to utilizing curriculum in hands on ways that promote higher level critical thinking skills in children.
2. To advocate for more experiences that empower children to grow as social activists while providing opportunities for contributions to the larger Teaneck Community
3. To continue growing opportunities for children to follow passions and interests through additional clubs, activities, and learning opportunities.
4. To ensure that differentiated learning opportunities are provided in fiscally responsible ways that focus on meeting students where they are and growing them.

It would be easy for me to rewrite my resume into a position statement, talk about my educational background and years in education, however, that alone does not qualify me to be a board member. It is the driving force I have for children, my commitment to advocacy and equity, and my passion for continuing to better the larger community that makes me a worthy candidate for the TCCS Board. So, I will end how I should have begun this statement. My name is Stacy Beharry, and I hope you consider voting for me so that together we can work toward the advancement of our school.

Regards,
Stacy Beharry
Candidate

Yvette Gonzalez

Position Paper

First of all, thank you for allowing me the privilege to serve as your Board Secretary the last 3 years. It's been an incredibly rewarding and learning experience.

For those that do not know me, my name is Yvette Gonzalez, Teaneck resident for 16 years this August and an active parent at the Teaneck Community Charter School for 14 years and counting, with a graduate who is now a THS Senior and two little ones in 4th and 3rd grade at TCCS.

Why am I running for the Board a second term?

Investing in my children, your children and giving back to the Community has become a part of who I am. It's fair to say the last three years were interesting due to the pandemic and I am eager to serve the community post-Covid and on a fully back to normal schedule.

Personally, I do not have an extensive educational background however, I believe to have something of equal value – TCCS Experience since 2010. I have seen the Charter school evolve into the amazing community it is today. Being a parent from the "OG" days, that fire and grit to serve still fuels me and I wholeheartedly believe it's my duty to help pass it along. We are only as great as the time we invest in this amazing community and in our children. It's essential to always remember how this amazing place and all its treasures came about. Being present comes in a many shapes and colors, it's our responsibility once we join this community to find a need and fulfill it.

As many of you might know, I'm a huge advocate for the Performing Arts Program from the day it was established. Single handedly, I've seen how being part of something so magical can be transformative and a saving grace for a child. This is why I've dedicated so much into the Musical Boosters and continuously, tirelessly share my experiences and encourage the parents to participate. Education should be as versatile as it's learners and I truly believe music and creativity are both a channel to a better education, especially for kids who come across other learning challenges.

While being on the Board, along with the Communications Committee we organized a survey to gather data on the community's occupation and skillset. When I was first elected, I spoke about Community Service and hands on learning, this is an intricate part of TCCS's mission and who else better than the parents to create a space where we can easily provide hands on guidance and learning. Tying this into the Performing Arts program, kids who have volunteered backstage or auditioned have gone off to pursue careers in stage lighting or performers and have found their calling through that stage. The more opportunities and platforms we provide for our children in this community the better we prepare them for the world's community.

It's my hope and desire that you allow me to continue to serve you and our children.

Thank you!

Xiomara Valdes-Hadnot

Position Letter

I want to start with thanking you for taking the time to read this and investing in their child/children's education. Teaneck Community Charter School is the choice to invest. A choice to educate your child in a school where its mission of student achievement is something you believe in. As a board member, I always focus on student achievement while taking time to invest in community feedback, and abide by a code of ethics. An advocate for ALL children, not just my own.

I am the mother of three, two of which attend TCCS. My oldest daughter is a rising 6th grader who has attended TCCS since Kindergarten. My youngest daughter is just completing her first year at the school as a Kindergartener. My middle child attends a public school in Teaneck. For two of my children, TCCS was perfect. I had to make a different decision for my son. He requires additional educational services to meet his needs.

I have worked in public education for over 20 years in various different facets. Starting as an assistant to being a Director and eventually settling to raise my family, in District wide support and program development. Through that journey I began to understand the private and public sectors, work with world renown behavior and educational analysts and began to work toward curbing social inequality in education. Advocacy and special education law intertwined in my experiences.

I began my involvement journey at TCCS in 2017 when my oldest was in Kindergarten. I wanted to be as present as a full time working mom could be, I decided to be a class parent. I loved it and within two years, I wanted to be more involved with the Board so I decided to officially run for a seat. My son had just turned two, and with the realization of his needs, I wanted to work toward creating an environment for all the families within our community. My educational philosophy aligned perfectly with the mission of TCCS.

Running for the board was a grueling process. The stress of the forum and coming up with an appealing position letter, to sharing accolades, which never comes easy for me. Once that is done, then comes the anticipation of the voting results. For me then, it was also knowing I had a lot to learn about systems and the role of a board within a school. I have become educated on the policies and by laws that govern this system. I know that once you take the oath you must be ALL IN. As I look back on the achievements over my term, made possible by the board and school leadership, it was worth every second. Some of the major accomplishments were positive systems to affect school climate, linking the community as a resource to teachers, the analysis of curriculum to reflect today's learners, bettering data systems with accountability, security system advancements, a huge expansion project and of course, navigating and surviving COVID as a community. Strategic planning with all stakeholders allowed the TCCS community to continue to excel.

Teaneck Community Charter School is a wonderful place but there is more work to be done. The parent, teacher and student survey results have allowed the current board to set goals going forward. Our children always deserve better. My purpose is my children, your child. To the Teaneck I have called home since birth. To Teaneck Community Charter School, a place that has allowed me to continue my work to advocate for children and families, and a home away from home for my girls. To all the friends I have made and the village that surrounds my family. This community is amazing and I want to continue to work hard and fight the good fight. It is important that those who have gone before help support those who will come tomorrow. I feel that being elected to sit on the board for a second term will allow me to make a positive impact for our community.

Please vote for me to be a board member for Teaneck Community Charter School.

Sincerely,

Xiomara Valdes-Hadnot



ANDREA SHUMAN

Dear TCCS Community,

I would like to ask for your support as I run for a position on the Board of Trustees with the Teaneck Community Charter School. During my time at TCCS, my career path has changed from structural engineer to stay home parent to math tutor to real estate agent with Weichert. My constant has been my kids and this school. I hope to bring a sense of continuity to the board given my decade-long period as a parent at TCCS.

My oldest son, Kylar, began his kindergarten year in 2013 at TCCS and graduated the 8th grade just last year. I currently have a 7th (Donovin) and 4th (Vanessa) grader attending TCCS. It has been quite a journey. I have seen the school go through several changes of administration, make leaps of advancement for utilizing technology for students, and overcome the unique challenges of covid based learning. I have witnessed the efforts of many bring about a new gymnasium & arts and music suite, as well as the addition of the performance stage. Trusting those who came before me and stepping up to finish their work and work towards new goals is what has made TCCS one of the greatest schools to send my children.

When I started here as a parent in 2013, I was overwhelmed with small children. I didn't understand a lot about this community. A wise parent told me in response to me asking how they had time to volunteer so much, "You will have your time." Quite laughable to me now but I never forgot that conversation. I have continually shown up to volunteer and be a presence in the school for children to witness. I started out slow; just attending a school sponsored event with 3 small children can be a lot for any parent. I gradually felt ready to be a class parent (5 times), volunteer to run the registers at the Scholastic Book Fairs, and chair an event (Special Person's Day) I had grown to love for the TCSCO. When called upon by the TCSCO to help make flyers, I became the "Flyer Master" and that role led me to fill the role of TCSCO secretary for 2 years, 1 year as TCSCO Vice Chair and finally this year as TCSCO Chair. I have learned a lot and met so many wonderful parents and teachers who are as invested as I in children's education. I have a support team of mostly individuals I have met through this community and that is why I feel so strongly that the next step for me is to serve as a Board of Trustee member for TCCS. I want to work towards preparing TCCS for future challenges and ensure success in reaching our community goals for academics and propelling TCCS in a positive direction by strengthening our school communication for students and parents. Our greatest resource is realized when we combine our academic goals for our children and insert student and parent energy into our school community. Harnessing and focusing our energies as a team effort will help TCCS continue to stand out as a desired school placement.

With gratitude,

Andrea Shuman