

Application

Welcome to Touchstone Community School!
We invite you to submit an application once you've had an opportunity to visit our school. The application gives you an opportunity to describe your child and the kind of educational environment you are seeking; we look forward to receiving it and scheduling a visit date for your child.

ADMISSIONS

The first step in the admissions process is to determine if our school is a good match for your child and your family. If you have not already visited the school, please call Jennifer Weeden to schedule a tour. We recommend that you visit us first, so we may answer all of your questions, and then introduce your child to the school.

We hope that after visiting, you will decide to submit an application for admission. A complete application consists of:

- A completed "Application for Admission" form and any supporting materials required (see form)
- A completed "Consent to Release Student Records" form
- A nonrefundable application fee of \$50, payable by check to Touchstone Community School

We cannot process your application until we receive all of these materials. Please note that we will also need the records from your child's current school (if applicable) before processing the application. WHILE WE DO NEED TO RECEIVE RECORDS DIRECTLY from the school, you may help expedite the process by encouraging your child's current school to send out the materials as soon as they receive our request. We ask for copies of progress reports as well as a completed evaluation form from your child's current teacher, which we send directly to the school.

Once we have everything in hand (the application materials mentioned above, plus all of the records and the teacher evaluation from your child's current school, if applicable), we will arrange a time for your child to visit.

- Children who will be three by February 1, or four or five by September 1, will be invited to attend a special screening session, conducted by two of our teachers. The session lasts for about an hour and gives our teachers an opportunity to watch your child interact with peers, listen to a story, work on a small art project, and have a snack (please let us know ahead of time if your child has any food allergies).
- Children who will be six by September 1 will be invited to spend a day in a classroom of peers.
- Older children will be invited to participate in one or two full school days in one of our current classrooms. While our teachers are sometimes able to fully assess a child in one day, we may need to schedule two days so that we can make the best possible assessment. During the visit, your child will be asked to participate in some group learning activities and perform some writing, reading, and mathematics work.

After your child's visit, his or her application will be reviewed by our Admissions Committee, in consideration of the following:

- Our teachers' assessment, based primarily on the visit and secondarily on materials received from his or her current school: Will your child contribute to and benefit from our learning environment?
- Compatibility of your family's educational goals with Touchstone's mission and philosophy: Will Touchstone be a good fit for your child and your family?
- A balance of boys and girls in each classroom and a good learning group: Will Touchstone be able to provide an environment for everyone that is conducive to learning?

We have neither testing nor specialized evaluation services available at Touchstone Community School, nor are we able to offer support services for children with special needs. Should additional information about your child be required, we must ask you to provide this at your own expense.

We will send you a letter regarding your child's application, usually within two weeks of your child's visit. If your child is accepted, you will receive an Enrollment Agreement. Once you sign and return the Enrollment Agreement, along with the required tuition deposit, your child is officially enrolled. For families applying for financial aid, a smaller tuition deposit is required and enrollment becomes official once the financial aid award has been accepted.

FINANCIAL AID INFORMATION

Touchstone Community School's commitment to economic diversity began in 1984 with the establishment of our financial aid program. While the school is not able to meet the full financial needs of every family, parents who wish their children to attend Touchstone are encouraged to apply for financial aid if they feel that the tuition will be out of their family's financial reach.

Awards are made based on the financial need of the family and do not need to be repaid. Affording a quality private education does take some planning, and most families employ several strategies to keep costs within reach. In this planning, it is important to realize that the family bears the primary responsibility for financing the child's education to the extent it is able. Families adjust spending priorities, maximize parents' earnings, and carefully manage assets in order to afford tuition; families are expected to scrutinize their resources and explore every source of support (such as grandparents) before applying for assistance.

Funding for Touchstone Community School's financial aid comes directly from the school's operating budget (the tuition paid by families); federal and state funds are not involved.

In order to fairly and objectively assess each family's need, the school uses the independent service of the School and Student Service (SSS) for Financial Aid in Princeton, New Jersey. When a family's need is assessed, its financial circumstances are considered according to a standardized formula. This formula takes into account gross taxable and non-taxable income, assets, liabilities, and family size. After an allowance is deducted for taxes and basic necessities, a portion of discretionary income is considered to be available for education according to a sliding scale. The greater the income and assets, the more parents are expected to contribute.

Families apply for aid directly to SSS by filling out the Parents' Financial Statement (PFS), available online at <http://sss.nais.org/parents>. Paper copies are available at the school office, but the processing happens much more quickly for families who apply online.

Every adult who lives with and/or is responsible for a child must fill out a PFS. This means that in cases of divorce, separation, or in cases where the adults have never been married, each person must file. It is important to remember that the school can only be equitable to all families by having each family fully disclose the income(s) available to support a child.

In families where there is a spouse who does not work outside the home but who is not caring for young children (those who are not enrolled in school or daycare) or other dependents, the school may apply an imputed income representing an amount equal to part-time (20 hours per week) employment at minimum wage. It is unfair to ask dual-income families to subsidize the educational costs of a family where one parent chooses to be unemployed.

Families must apply for aid each year, and receipt of aid one year is not a guarantee that aid will be available in subsequent years. Currently enrolled families are considered for aid first, and then awards are made to families that are applying for admission. Deadlines will be communicated clearly, but it is always wise to have tax returns prepared and finalized as early as possible; the first deadline for currently enrolled families is usually in February and requires copies of tax returns that aren't due for federal filing until April 15.

The school keeps all financial information in strict confidence. There is a small financial aid committee, composed of employees of the school, that makes financial aid decisions. Decisions are communicated as quickly as possible.

The school is generally able to meet about 50 percent of a family's demonstrated need, depending on the number of families who apply, their level of need, and the budget available for aid.

APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION

Please print, and complete all pages.

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Full name: _____ Nickname: _____

Home address: _____
STREET CITY STATE ZIP

Telephone: _____ Female _____ Male _____ Date of birth: _____

Country of birth: _____ Applying for year: _____ Current grade, if applicable: _____

Siblings (please list names, birthdates, and schools attending if applicable): _____

Languages spoken at home: _____

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Current school or daycare: _____ Teacher's name: _____

Mailing address: _____
STREET CITY STATE ZIP

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____ Web site: _____

Names of prior schools attended: _____

Other schools to which you have applied: _____

FAMILY INFORMATION

Parent: _____

(If different from above):

Mailing address: _____
STREET

CITY STATE ZIP

Home telephone: _____

Email: _____

Occupation: _____

Employer: _____

Work telephone: _____

Cell phone _____

If parents are divorced, please put a check mark next to the parent with legal custody of this student, if applicable.

PLEASE PRINT, AND FEEL FREE TO ATTACH ADDITIONAL PAGES IF YOU NEED MORE SPACE.

How did you learn about Touchstone Community School?

Why do you wish to enroll your child at Touchstone Community School?

Through what age do you intend to send your child to Touchstone Community School?

How do you view your child? What are his/her strengths, particular interests, points of irritation and pleasure?

How would you describe your parenting style?

Please describe a time, recently, when you and your child disagreed about something; what happened, and how does this reflect your approach to discipline?

What are your long- and short-term educational goals for your child?

What expectations do you have of Touchstone Community School in terms of your child's experience here?

What do you value in your child's current school experience? Or, conversely, what has been lacking in that experience?

Are there important aspects of your own schooling experience that have influenced your thinking about the kind of school you are looking for, for your child?

What books does your child like to read (or have read to him/her)? What book was most recently read for pleasure?

How does your child spend his/her time outside of school? Does he/she attend any special classes or activities? What leisure activities does your family enjoy together?

What else would be helpful for us to know about your child?

Please describe any special educational services (including tutoring) your child has received in or outside of school, and include copies of all related educational reports and /or evaluations with this application.

Is there any information regarding your child's health, learning, family, and/or psychological history that Touchstone Community School would need to know in order to assess our ability to provide a positive learning environment for him or her? We require that you provide any academic or psychological assessments done in the past three years with this application.

CONSENT TO RELEASE STUDENT RECORDS

Applicant's Name _____

I hereby give my permission to have all pertinent records as listed below for my child sent to Touchstone Community School.

Progress Reports and/or Report Cards

Student Evaluation (enclosed for current teacher to fill out)

Health Record

Record of Extracurricular Activities

Standardized Achievement Test Scores (if applicable)

Intelligence and Aptitude Test Scores (if applicable)

Personality and Interest Test Scores (if applicable)

Core Evaluation Information (if applicable)

Verbal communication between child's current school and Touchstone

Verbal and/or written communication between education or health professionals serving/supporting child and Touchstone

Your signature(s) indicates that all information in this application is accurate and complete, and that you are the legal guardian(s) of the applicant and responsible for his or her education.

Parent or Guardian
Date

Date

Parent or Guardian

Return this Application, including the Consent to Release Records form, along with a check for \$50 (application fee) made out to Touchstone Community School to:

Admissions
Touchstone Community School
54 Leland Street
Grafton MA 01519

Admission to Touchstone Community School is open to all children without regard to race, color, creed, sexual orientation, ancestry, citizenship, or national or ethnic origin. Financial aid decisions are made separately from enrollment decisions.



Touchstone Community School
WWW.TOUCHSTONESCHOOL.COM

508.839.0038 PHONE | 508.839.7331 FAX
54 LELAND STREET | GRAFTON, MA 01519

engaging. inspiring. empowering.