



teaching touches, inc.
PARENT - TEACHER STORE

P R O F I L E

Teaching Touches

1846 West 26th Street • Erie, PA • 16508
814.871.6676 • www.teachingtouchescatalog.com

Teaching Touches, a retail store selling educational materials and supplies, was founded twenty years ago by Bo Iole, a second grade teacher, and Linda Sanner, a school secretary. After two decades of successfully serving Erie and the surrounding areas, it became time for them to find new owners with new energy, new ideas and new resources. Cheri T. McGuire, a former teacher, and Barry A Romich, an engineer/entrepreneur, bought the company in May 2013.

The Teaching Touches mission is to create a community in which we can teach and learn from one another and foster this love of learning by providing the highest quality educational support materials while upholding the highest standards in customer service. Their broad product line includes products

that can be used both in the classroom as well as in the home. Sales fall into three categories: walk-ins at the store, purchase orders issued by schools and other organizations and their Internet catalog (www.teachingtouchescatalog.com.) The store's dedicated and knowledgeable staff focuses on fulfilling their customers' needs by helping them create positive learning environments. They pride themselves on going the extra mile to special order items that will help make their customer's vision a reality.

While the store has traditionally focused on the needs of teachers and parents, Product Specialist Garrett McGuire has something else in mind. A precocious third grader, Garrett participates in decisions regarding what toys and games are carried at Teaching Touches. His mom makes sure they are a

good match with the Teaching Touches' mission and Garrett makes sure they are fun! In Garrett's Corner, a section of the web site, he provides reviews of his favorites.

Thriving in the fluctuating education and business environment has required making some innovative changes. A significant focus is the STEAM fields (Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics). Teaching Touches offers lamination, booklet binding, custom laser engraving and custom poster printing. They have been contacted by schools with a need for 3-D printing and the purchase of a 3-D printer is being considered. Another area of interest would be to assist the needs of Homeschooled children.

In collaboration with a private foundation, they have initiated a Teacher Support Program to provide gift certificates to Pre-K through Grade 6 teachers throughout Erie County. "It is important for us to partner with others in the education field and explore all of the ways that we can support and give back to our community." Teachers, parents and kids are invited to join in obtaining this goal by suggesting new products and services for Teaching Touches to offer. "You don't have to be a teacher to enter our store," McGuire says. "We foster a lifelong love of learning by providing educational products and services our community depends upon."

