



Taft Elementary School

FAMILY HANDBOOK

2022 - 2023



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1. About Taft

Taft has approximately 570 students in grades K through 5. We have 23 classrooms with approximately 22-26 students in each. We also have 3 Special Education Aspire classrooms with approximately 6-12 students in each. Besides a well-rounded general academic program, your child will also participate in programs that include art, music, library/media, physical education, and instrumental music. We also have additional support programs including Speech, Academic Intervention Services (AIS) in Math and Reading, a variety of Special Education programs, English as a New Language (ENL) and counseling services. Our support staff includes a school psychologist, guidance counselor, special education teachers, speech teachers, ENL teachers, AIS teachers, an occupational therapist, physical therapist, and a school nurse.

2. Central Administration

Dr. Larry Washington - Deputy Superintendent of Schools
Mrs. Barbara Quinn - Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction
Mrs. Lynn Imperato - Director of Personnel and Staff Development
Mrs. Stephanie Bryan - Director of Pupil Personnel Services
Mr. Thomas Rigney - Supervisor of Special Education
Ms. Jessica Mojica - Supervisor of Special Education
Mrs. Sandra Clohessy – Assistant Superintendent for Business
Mr. Joseph Catania - Director of Data Management & Technology
Mr. Paul Nienstadt – Assistant Superintendent for Operations and Safety
Ms. Suzanne Lenzian - Athletic Director

Public School Budget Vote

Please be sure you are a registered voter here at your new address. Every spring public schools hold a school budget vote and we want to encourage all of our Washingtonville residents to come out and vote! You can register to vote and update your voter registration at this NYS website: <https://www.elections.ny.gov/VotingRegister.html>

3. Important Names at Taft

Mrs. Christine Williams – Principal
Dr. Leah Hindley - Assistant Principal
Mrs. Tracey Finn - Main Office School Secretary
Mrs. Christine DiVirgilio – Main Office Clerk/Typist
Mrs. Colleen Davy - School Nurse
Mrs. Victoria Estridge - Clerk/Typist for Nurse’s Office/Library
Ms. Alana Madigan- School Psychologist
Ms. Danielle Mintz - School Psychologist
Mr. Lamont Anglin - School Guidance Counselor
Officer Scott Davy - Washingtonville PD
Officer Bob Kammarada - Washingtonville PD

4. Important Phone Numbers

Taft’s Main Office: 845-497-4000 ext. 22501/22502 **Taft’s Fax:** 845-497-4002
Washingtonville Central School District Website: www.wcsdk12.org
Taft’s Website: <https://tf.wcsdk12.org>

5. School Hours: 8:55 am – 2:55 pm

Students can be dropped off and will unload from the buses between 8:40-8:55 am and proceed to their homeroom class. Those who are getting breakfast, will go to the cafeteria first. The school day officially begins at 8:55 am with morning announcements and the Pledge of Allegiance. **Students arriving after 8:55 am will be considered tardy.** Dismissal begins at 2:55 pm with dismissal of our “walkers” or students getting picked up and our Latchkey students, followed by the students riding buses.

Students getting picked up will wait in a designated area in the building. Each student must be signed out by their parent/guardian. Please have your photo ID ready. *(More detailed information below.)*

If your child's dismissal plans need to change for a day, please send in a note with your child and have them give it to their classroom teacher. **Please have the date, your child's full name and their teacher's name on the note.** If your child will be getting picked up or staying after school each week on the same day(s) only one note will be required and kept on file. If there is a change in plans, please write a note explaining the change. The more detailed information in the note, the better! We want to make sure we know your child's dismissal plans.

Emergency situations arise on occasion. The end of the day gets very busy in the main office so we ask that you plan accordingly and call the main office with any dismissal changes by 2:00 pm. To ensure that students fully participate in end of the day procedures we strongly discourage parents/guardians from picking up their child(ren) prior to 2:55 pm. Everyone will be asked to present a Photo ID when picking up your child(ren).

If you need to change your child's dismissal plan due to an unforeseen circumstance, we ask that you please call the office BEFORE 2:00 pm.

6. Attendance

Being in school is the most important job that each student has here at Taft. In order for every child in Taft to learn and grow to their fullest potential, we need them to stay healthy and be in school. Please know that our goal is to have our students present in school at least 90% of the time. This means that they should not be absent more than 18 days a year, which is once or twice a month.

In New York, the State Education Department (SED) defines chronic absenteeism as missing 10 percent of school days or **18 days or more per year in a 180-day school year.** That's about two days per month. Notably, that includes both excused and unexcused absences. Excused absences would include an illness, religious observation, or bereavement. Absences that occur due to vacation, errands, or oversleeping are unexcused absences. Chronic student absence reduces even the best teacher's ability to provide learning opportunities for your child.

We want our children to learn early on that going to school on time, every day is important. One day, our children will be adults and we want them to be active and successful members of society. We want all of our students to reach their full potential and learn necessary skills. Thank you for working together with us for your child's success!

7. Class Placement

We work diligently to ensure that all of our students are placed in classrooms that are best suited for their individual needs and learning style. There are many contributing factors that go into creating a classroom roster. We take into consideration each child's learning style, academic levels, work habits and social emotional development. We will also consider personality types and try to put students in an environment that would be best for them. We then work to balance each classroom in a way so that students will be with a variety of learners in their classroom. Some students in their class may be performing above or below your child in certain areas or they may be at the same level as your child in some areas. We designate certain classrooms at each grade level to include either English Language Learners or students with Individualized Education Plans so support staff can be assigned to support those students' needs as well. ALL classrooms have a variety of students where teachers work to meet each student at their individual level in all areas. No matter what class your child is placed in, they are challenged at their level in order to learn, grow, and be successful in all areas! We do not take direct parent requests for teachers.

8. Taft Wizard Expectations and Student Recognition

We expect all of our students to be respectful, responsible, safe, and show self-control wherever they go. Our teachers and you, their families will work together to support our children academically, socially, and emotionally.

Throughout the year, as part of our character education program, students will be recognized as a Student of the Month for going above and beyond our expectations. Students are recognized for their positive achievements and actions during their grade level lunch. Their photo is taken to be shared on our TV in the main lobby as well as on social media. For their safety and confidentiality, we do not show student names with pictures. Students of the Month will bring home a certificate and a letter. This year, they will get to eat lunch with the principal. We pledge to be respectful, responsible, safe and show self-control in all areas of the school as well as at home and in the community. Click [HERE](#) for a poster to print for home!

Every Wednesday is “Wizard Wednesday”! We encourage our students and staff to show their Wizard Pride by wearing **blue** and **gold** every Wednesday!

9. Code of Conduct & Student Discipline

The Washingtonville Central School District Code of Conduct can be found on our website or [HERE](#). Please take a moment to review this, especially the “Student Bill of Rights and Responsibilities”. This outlines our students’ rights and responsibilities as well as the role of parents and school personnel. At the elementary level, we use a progressive discipline approach. This means that our goal is to teach students appropriate behaviors by educating them on proper behavior expectations while balancing that education with appropriate consequences to address the inappropriate behaviors. If inappropriate behaviors continue to occur, we will progress the consequences while also working with the team (student, teacher, parent) to implement a behavior plan to help the student be more successful.

10. DASA - [Dignity for All Students Act](#)

New York State’s Dignity for All Students Act (The Dignity Act) seeks to provide the State’s public elementary and secondary school students with a safe and supportive environment free from discrimination, intimidation, taunting, harassment, and bullying on school property, a school bus and/or at a school function.

Discrimination under DASA would be discrimination against any student by a student or group of students and/or an employee or group of employees on school property or at a school function including, but not limited to discrimination based on a person’s actual or perceived: race, color, national origin, ethnic group, weight, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, or sex (including gender identity and expression).

Harassment and bullying under DASA has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student’s educational performance, opportunities or benefits or mental, emotional or physical well-being; or that reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause a student to fear for his or her physical safety; or reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause a physical injury or emotional harm to a student; or occurs off school property and creates or would foreseeably create a risk of substantial disruption with the school environment, where it is foreseeable that the conduct, threats, intimidation or abuse might reach school property.

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose. (www.stopbullying.gov) This definition also includes digital media formats, such as

but not limited to: emails, text, facetime, TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook, etc.) If your child has their own personal device, please be very aware of what they are doing on the device and who they are communicating with.

Is it bullying? When someone says or does something *unintentionally* hurtful and they do it once, that's rude. When someone says or does something *intentionally* hurtful and they do it once, that's mean. When someone says or does something *intentionally* hurtful and *they keep doing it*, even when you tell them to stop or show them that you are upset, that's bullying.

More information about DASA can be found on our website [HERE](#).

11. [Health Office](#)

School Nurse: Mrs. Colleen Davy

Phone Number: (845) 497-4000 ext. 22531

Secretary for the Health Office: Mrs. Victoria Estridge

Phone Number: (845) 497-4000 ext. 22532 **Fax Number:** (845) 497-4002

New York State Legislation requires medical examinations of children entering pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, grades 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11 and any new student entering the district for the first time. Physicals and the Annual Physical Examination Form need to be completed within 12 months prior to the commencement of the school year in which the examination is required and **provided to the school nurse within 30 days after the start of school by the student**. Vision screenings will be done annually on students in grades K-3, 5, 7, and 10. Hearing screenings will be done on students in grades K, 1, 3, 5, 7 and 10. All new entrants will be screened for vision and hearing.

District policy asks parents to keep sick children home from school if they show signs of illness or other infections. If a child has a fever, he/she should remain at home until his/her temperature has been normal for at least 24 hours without medication. If a child comes down with a fever or becomes ill during the day a parent/guardian will be called to come pick them up from school immediately. Please keep your child home if they have any symptoms of respiratory or gastrointestinal infections, such as cough, fever, sore throat, vomiting, or diarrhea.

We have many students that have been diagnosed with different medical conditions and/or allergies. For your child's safety and health, it is imperative that the school nurse be aware of your child's medical condition or allergies. If a child needs to take medication for medical reasons during the school day, please fill out the Authorization for Administration of Medicine Form which can be accessed via the District website and the necessary medication is supplied to the school in case of an emergency during the school day. Please note all medications need to be in the properly labeled original container and must be dropped off to the health office by an adult. The child must not bring the medication to school.

If your child has a medical condition that prohibits them from participating in any physical activity a note from the physician must be provided to the school identifying the restrictions and the time frame the child will not be able to participate in any physical activities.

When your child returns from being absent, please send in a note explaining the reason for their absence. You can also email or call the health office.

NYS Immunization Requirements for 2022-2023 [HERE](#). NYS Public Health Law requires that children be immunized prior to entering school. **New Law on School Immunization Requirements: Removing Nonmedical Exemption:** On June 13, 2019, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo signed legislation removing

nonmedical exemptions from school vaccination requirements for children to help protect the public from the worst measles outbreak in more than 25 years. What does the new law do? The new law no longer allows a religious exemption to the requirement that children be vaccinated against measles and other diseases to attend either public, private or parochial school (for students in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade), or day care. Please forward all immunization records to the health office. Also, it is highly suggested that your child(ren) receives a dental exam from a pediatric dentist. The dental health certificate may be found on the district website under the Health Office. All forms may be submitted to the Health Office.

12. Transportation

Assistant Director of Transportation: Mr. Ralph Perez

Dispatcher Routing/Babysitting Daycare Requests: Mrs. Jessica Edwards

Phone number: (845) 497-4000 ext. 27101 or 27102 **Transportation Fax:** (845) 497-4006

Students riding a bus will be assigned a bus route based on their address with a time and location of pick-up and drop-off. Bus route information was mailed home to each family. Please make sure your child knows their bus route number and help them to remember their bus driver's name. In addition, review with your child the transportation rules and regulations. To ensure the safety of all of our students it is important that students abide by these rules and regulations. Failure to follow the rules may result in the suspension of bus privileges.

If your child will be getting picked up and/or is going home to a location other than their own home on a consistent basis (ex. daycare, babysitter, etc.), a babysitter daycare request form needs to be submitted to the Transportation Department for approval **each year**. Upon approval from the Transportation Department you will be notified of your child's bus route number. Students are on the bus for different lengths of time.

Although having in their possession any electronic devices and/or toys is strongly discouraged, if a parent elects to allow their child to have these devices and/or toys on the bus, understand that these devices are on the bus at your own risk. The District is not responsible if they are lost, misplaced, damaged or stolen. Also, these devices must be used following the guidelines stated in the Code of Conduct Handbook. Please no toys that can be dangerous on a bus (throwing, rolling, etc.) Please know that if your child is distracting the driver or using that item inappropriately, the bus driver may hold that item during the bus ride.

In addition, if there are any changes in your child's departure schedule, please call the main office at 845-497-4000 ext. 22501 or 22502 or email the main office – tfinn@wcsdk12.org and cdivirgilio@wcsdk12.org by 2:00 pm. Please do not email only the classroom teacher as they may not see it prior to the end of the day. If at any time you have a question or concern about transportation procedures please feel free to contact the main office or the transportation supervisor.

Latchkey before and after school program has limited availability through the Blooming Grove Recreation Center. You can call 845-496-9201 or email BCRecreation@hotmail.com for more information.

13. Student Drop-Off/Pick-Up

For students not riding the bus, we utilize our side parking lot and side doors for both student drop-off and pick-up. **No cars in the front parking lot of the school between 8:00-8:55 and 2:00-3:15.** Students will enter the building through the front/lower wing side door when getting dropped off in the morning. Students should only be let out of the vehicle in between the cones, our designated Drop-Off Zone, during the designated drop off times from 8:40 - 8:55 am. In an effort to keep the flow of traffic moving, we ask that only students exit the car in the "Drop-off Zone". For the safety of the students, please do not drop your students

off outside of the "Drop-off Zone". When being picked up in the afternoon, they will use the back/upper wing side door from 2:55 - 3:10 pm. These doors are staffed by staff/security during drop-off and pick-up times. Parents, please drive carefully and stay in your car.

While waiting on Toleman Road, please do NOT block any of the school entrances or local roadways.



14. Morning Drop-Off

All traffic is to enter at the entrance of the far parking lot.

No cars will be permitted to park/stand on Toleman Road.

All students (K-5) that are being driven to school are to be dropped off in the "Drop-Off Zone" only, **between 8:40-8:55 am**. Students are not to be dropped off in front of the school, on Toleman Road, or in other parking lots. **Students who arrive after 8:55 will be marked tardy**. Students who arrive after 8:55 will need to be dropped off in front of the school so they can get a late pass.

When exiting the parking lot during arrival and dismissal times, we prefer you make a right hand turn. This will help alleviate traffic congestion on Toleman Road as our buses will be entering and exiting at the same time.

If you have to assist your child with drop-off and need to park your car, park in the spots designated for visitor parking. If all spots are filled, please park in the rear parking lot and have your child walk on the

path to the front wing side door. For the safety of all the students, they are not to be walking in the parking lot unattended.

15. Afternoon Pick-Up

Students that are being picked up at dismissal will be released as “walkers” and **dismissed at 2:55 pm** to a designated area within the building. A staff member will come to your car for you to sign your child(ren) out. You will be asked to give your child’s name and grade to a staff member. **We ask that you please remain in your vehicle at all times. Have your photo ID ready.** We discourage you from parking as this may disrupt the flow of traffic and you may get blocked in.

For students who are assigned a bus and for some reason now need to be picked up from school on a particular day, you need to send in a note stating that they are being picked up and by whom. At all times be prepared to show a photo ID when picking up your child. No student will be released to a parent/guardian/designated contact without a note and ID. We understand that emergencies happen. If you need to call the school to notify the office you will be picking your child up on a particular day, please call BEFORE 2:00 pm.

16. Recess

In addition to the students' two scheduled physical education classes during the week, students will have additional physical activity during recess every day. Students will either work directly with a recess monitor on an activity and/or have the opportunity to choose activities while moving through stations. Students will also have the opportunity for free play. Please be sure you send your child to school with sneakers on all scheduled PE days. Because we have recess everyday, be mindful of outfits and shoes. We go outside when the temperature is 20 degrees or above. We remain inside in inclement weather. You may send in water bottles with your child on hot days, reusable bottles are best. Please have their full name on all water bottles and outer clothing (jackets, sweaters, sweatshirts, etc.).

17. [Technology](#)

Every elementary student will be issued a one to one device, Chromebook. Please be sure to review the [Chromebook Parent/Student Handbook](#). Each student will also have their own Google account. Your child will use this when they log into Chrome on a home computer or onto a Chromebook. It is best for students to access their account via a “Chrome Browser”. Please be careful not to share your child’s login information. Their Login or User ID will be their Student Email Address. Each student is given a special password that only classroom teachers will know. Please help your child remember their login information and keep it safe and secure at all times. There may be times when a password needs to be changed by the district.

Students should not bring their own personal technology devices (laptops, iPads, portable game devices, etc.) to school. If your child has a cell phone, it must be turned off and stored in their backpack for the whole day. If they are wearing a watch, fitbit, or smartwatch, it must be kept silent at all times. Students are not allowed to make phone calls, facetime, or texts during the school day. The school is not responsible for personal items.

18. [Food Services](#)

Director of Food Services: Mr. Robert Gellman (845) 497-4000 ext. 27122

Head of Food Service at Taft: Mrs. Debra Gialella (845) 497-4000 ext. 22581

The Washingtonville Central School District provides students with the opportunity to have breakfast and/or a hot or cold lunch each day. **Breakfast is \$2.50 and lunch is \$3.00 this school year.** Students also have the opportunity to get a “jumbo” lunch for an additional \$2.00 as well as purchase a variety of snacks during their lunch time... after they finish eating their lunch. These snacks can be eaten during lunch time or brought to the classroom for an afternoon snack if appropriate. Students are limited to purchasing 2 snacks a day. Parents may also put notes on their child’s account to inform the kitchen staff of any specific directions or restrictions. For more information and details, please see the Food Service Department section of our district website. Menus are available on the website.

Washingtonville offers an online payment system which can be accessed at MySchoolBucks.com via the District website. This system allows you to set up an account for your child online enabling you to securely deposit money into your child’s lunch account as well as view your child’s purchases.

Applying for free or reduced-price meals is very important! Free/reduced lunch applications are available from the website or main office and must be submitted by October 1st. Please note a new form must be filled out each school year. [Free and Reduced Meal Information Letter - English](#), [Free and Reduced Meal Application - English](#), [Free and Reduced Meal Information Letter - Spanish](#), [Free and Reduced Meal Application - Spanish](#) During the year if your financial situation changes an application for free/reduced lunch can be submitted to the Food Service Office at any time.

Parents are not permitted to come eat lunch with their child. Also, please do not send in microwavable items with your child. Due to many of the allergies some of our students have we have an allergy-free table in the cafeteria for students to sit at during lunch. Students do have the opportunity to have a snack in their classroom. **Please send your child in with a neat and healthy snack every day.** Please be sure all lunch boxes/bags/bottles are labeled with your child’s full name. If at any time you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call the Food Service Office or the main office.

19. [Food For Kids](#)

FOOD FOR KIDS is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization developed by our Washingtonville local community. Their purpose is to help supply children in need in the Washingtonville Central School District with easy-to-prepare food for weekends during the school year with an extension of the program during holiday breaks and summer months.

FFK Registration [HERE](#). Spanish FFK Registration [HERE](#).

20. [SchoolTool Parent Portal](#) (Parent Information)

The Washingtonville Central School District offers to our families a program for accessing school information. This program is known as the SchoolTool Parent Portal. Parents/Guardians will be able to securely access their child’s information via the Internet. Viewable information includes: emergency contacts, attendance, report card grades, and grades 3-8 State assessment results. To participate in this program, please complete the form found in the “[For Parents](#)” section of the website. Once the form has been received and the information verified, you will receive an electronic communication via email with instructions on how to access your portal account within the Schooltool Parent Portal. If you have any questions about this program, please contact the main office.

Please make sure that your contact information and emergency contacts are up to date. This is important for when we need to contact you with general information as well as during an emergency situation.

21. Blackboard Connect (School-to-Home Communications)

Blackboard Connect is an automated communication system used by the Washingtonville Central School District to automatically notify parents/guardians by phone/text/email of any upcoming events, changes in times/locations of events, school closures or delays, early dismissals or any other emergency situations. To ensure that you receive these messages please make sure that all contact information with the District is accurate and up-to-date in SchoolTool. If your personal information changes during the school year, please contact the main office with the new information so it can be changed in our system.

22. Faculty and Staff at Taft

First Grade	Ms. Cervone Mrs. Gonzalez Mrs. McElroy Mrs. Sweeney - Special Education Mrs. Umbrino Mrs. Valentine	Second Grade	Mrs. Donnelly - Special Education Mrs. Grausso Ms. Maguire Mrs. Parsi Mrs. Tramonte
Third Grade	Mrs. Hillman - Special Education Mrs. D. Kelly Mrs. Neville Mrs. Stadler Mrs. Walsh	Fourth Grade	Mrs. Arnold Mrs. S. Kelly Ms. Laspisa Ms. Lavelle - Special Education Mrs. Sorto Mrs. Sullivan
Fifth Grade	Mr. Anson Ms. Esposito - Special Education Ms. Gremli Ms. Hannon Mrs. Mahin Mr. Taylor	Aspire	Kinder - Mrs. Knoth 1st & 2nd - Ms. Kavanagh 2nd - 5th - Mrs. O'Hara
Special Areas	Mrs. Czumak - Art Mrs. Martinez - Library Media Specialist Ms. Byassee - Music/Chorus Mrs. DiPasquale - Instrumental Music Ms. Henn - Physical Education Mrs. Mullady - Physical Education	Related Service Providers	Mrs. Greico - English as a New Language Mrs. Shaw - English as a New Language Mrs. Shmarina - English as a New Language Ms. Yantz - English as a New Language Ms. Havrilla - Academic Intervention Services Reading Ms. Donohue- Academic Intervention Services Reading Mrs. Caufaglione - Academic Intervention Services Math Ms. Skirianos (leave replacement for Mrs. Novesky) - Academic Intervention Services Math Mrs. McCormick - Speech Mrs. Begley - Speech Ms. Klosterman - Speech Mrs. Rivera/ Mrs. Burns - Occupational Therapist Assistant Ms. Allspach - Physical Therapist
Related Service & Support	Ms. Madigan - Psychologist Ms. Mintz - Psychologist Mr. Anglin - Guidance		
Teaching Assistants	Gr. 1 Mrs. Clark Gr. 2 Mrs. Hastings Gr. 3 Mrs. Hanratty Gr. 3 Mrs. Hennesey Gr. 4 Mrs. LaSelva Gr. 5 Mrs. O'Neill	Aspire Teaching Assistants	Mrs. Armistead Ms. _____ Mrs. Davey Ms. Nicholas Mrs. DiGiovanni Ms. Parker Mrs. Doyle Ms. Ramirez M _____ Mrs. Smith Mrs. Foley Mrs. Spillman M _____ M _____
Office Staff	Mrs. Finn - Main Office Mrs. DiVirgilio - Main Office		Mrs. Davy - Nurse Mrs. Estridge- Nurse's Office/Library

Recess Monitors	Mrs. Hala Mrs. Padilla Mrs. Serse M ____	Greeter - Monitors	Mrs. Lynch Mrs. Gellman (+ playground)
Custodial Staff	Mr. Jennings, Head Custodian Mr. Breheny Mrs. Mann Mrs. Popaj Ms. Quinonez	Food Service	Mrs. Gialella, Head Food eService Mrs. Ajanel Mrs. Austin Mrs. Panatelli Mrs. Volkmann

23. NYS Standards and Washingtonville Curriculum

Here at Washingtonville, we follow the [NYS Next Generation Learning Standards](#) and follow a curriculum that meets the needs of all students in order for them to be successful and learn to their fullest potential. Student learning encompasses not only the NYS Standards, but also valuable curriculum, instruction, and assessment. You will learn more about your child’s curriculum and instruction during our Open House Night in the fall.

24. Academic Intervention Services (AIS - Reading and Math)

We have two AIS Reading teachers and two AIS Math teachers who work with our students who are 2 years below grade level expectations in reading and/or math. We determine which students qualify for AIS by giving regular benchmark assessments in both reading and math. Your child may qualify for additional services based on their assessment results and classroom performance. Please know that all of our classroom teachers work to teach valuable lessons and skills to all students no matter what level they are working at. Teachers use a variety of instructional strategies and materials to meet the needs of all students. We have a special “WIN” Time in each classroom, designed to give students “What I Need”. During this time, students are practicing strategies and skills in small groups, individually with the teacher, or independently. There may be times when your child qualifies for AIS for a short period of time in order to build up their foundational skills and then they may no longer need AIS. You will be notified as to whether or not your child qualifies for AIS.

25. Assessments (iReady / Fountas & Pinnell / Unit Checkpoints)

We utilize a variety of assessments to determine each child’s strengths and weaknesses. We want to ensure that all of our students are learning important grade level skills, especially in reading, writing, and math.

- **iReady** - Online program for reading and/or mathematics that will help your child’s teacher determine your child’s needs, personalize their learning, and monitor progress throughout the school year. With iReady, our teachers can meet your child exactly where they are and increase their learning based on specific performance data. Check out the [iReady Family Center](#) for more information.
- **Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment (F&P)** - This is a one-on-one comprehensive assessment used by teachers to determine a student’s independent and instructional reading levels. Teachers listen to students read individually in order to observe and quantify specific reading behaviors and then use that data to plan meaningful instruction that will increase the child’s reading abilities.
- **Lesson and Unit Checkpoints** - Throughout our curriculum for reading, writing, math, science, and social studies, our teachers will assess your child’s skills before, during, and after each unit of instruction to determine what their strengths and weaknesses are for that particular unit’s instructional goals. Teachers will use a variety of assessments to determine what each child needs.

26. English as a New Language (ENL)

Taft services the district's elementary students who are English Language Learners (ELL). We have a special opportunity to provide quality instruction for our ELLs with our five ENL teachers. Our school community has the opportunity to learn about friends from all around the world! Some of our students know other languages, such as: Spanish, Arabic, Korean, Vietnamese, Portuguese, Russian, Urdu, Chinese, Georgian, and Croatian!

27. Special Education

We have several special education programs to support our students who are classified with a disability or special need. Some of our students receive "resource room" support for specific skills, taught by a special education teacher. Some students are placed in a "consultant teacher model" classroom where there is a mix of general education students and special education students. Those classrooms have both a general education teacher and a special education teacher as well as support from a teaching assistant. Taft also has several special classrooms that we call "Aspire". These classes have 1 special education teacher, 4 teaching assistants, and no more than 12 students. All students who are classified as a student with a disability follow their Individualized Education Plan (IEP) which outlines their special education program, strengths, weaknesses, and goals. Our special education students follow the NYS Learning Standards and the Washingtonville curriculum guidelines to meet their individual needs in order for them to be successful learners. Special education determination is made by a committee on special education and parents are a part of that committee.

28. Pick-A-Time (Parent/Teacher Conferences)

Our District utilizes "Pick-A-Time", an online scheduling website, for setting up parent/teacher conference appointments during our scheduled District's Conference days. This will allow parents to schedule their own appointments through the web at the Washingtonville Central School District homepage. You will receive more information as the dates approach.

29. [Taft Parent-Teacher Association \(PTA\)](#)

Taft has a very active and involved parent-teacher association. The PTA sponsors many school-wide events including a welcome back bash, science fair, book fair, holiday gift fair, and so much more! The money raised by its various fundraisers is used for many special projects and events in school such as assembly programs and field trips. Refer to the Taft Calendar and/or the PTA monthly newsletter for dates of monthly meetings and events. Please get involved and join the Taft PTA! We are only as strong as our volunteers.

Taft PTA Executive Board 2022-2023

Co-presidents - Elizabeth Richland & Carolyn Pickens

Vice President - Diann Amante & Ryan Osborne

Treasurer - Jackie Blais

Co-Secretary - Kira Saltz & Tara McCauley

Support our Taft PTA All Year Long!

Amazon Smile - Register your Amazon Prime account with Amazon Smile and list Taft PTA as your chosen non-profit. You can also register & shop at smile.amazon.com - all the same great products that Amazon offers with the added perk of supporting our school! ... for FREE!!

1. Go to the main menu of the Amazon shopping app & tap into settings.
2. Tap "Amazon Smile" in the programs & features section and follow the instructions to complete the

process.

3. We are “PTA New York Congress 004-211 Taft Elementary PTA”

Box Tops for Education

Download the Box Tops app and create an account with “Taft Elementary” as your chosen school. Take a picture of your grocery receipts and the app will automatically detect qualifying purchases!

Various Fundraisers

Throughout the year, the Taft PTA will have different sales or activities that are fundraisers for the association. We thank you in advance for your support of our Taft PTA who support our Taft community!

30. Staying Connected

It is important for school-home communication. We do this in several ways at Taft. Parents are always welcome and encouraged to contact teachers whenever you have a question, concern, or report to share about your child. You can find our staff contacts on our website. You can also call the school to set up a phone call or conference. Teachers can also be reached via email. It’s typically first initial+last name with the same ending (@wcsdk12.org). Each teacher communicates in different ways with parents too (phone, email, newsletter, etc.). The district, school, PTA, teacher, and principal will all send communications. We are working to use less paper. However, you will occasionally find paper communication in your child’s backpack. Most of the time, you will get a phone call, e-mail, or text. We also encourage you to visit our website and social media pages for information, happenings, events, and updates. Some of the resources are listed below:

District website: www.wcsdk12.org

Taft website: <https://tf.wcsdk12.org>

Taft Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/taftelementary/>

District Facebook: www.facebook.com/WashingtonvilleSchools

District Twitter: <http://twitter.com/wcsd>

District App: Washingtonville Wizards

Look for our Taft PTA on Facebook and Instagram too!

FB: <https://www.facebook.com/Taft-PTA-162417007187244>

IG: <https://www.instagram.com/taftpta/>