



Gifted and Talented Program Guide

Introduction

Tenaflly Public Schools is dedicated to meeting the educational needs of their gifted and talented students through a comprehensive approach. We recognize that serving gifted learners requires more than just a single program. Instead, we emphasize the importance of a variety of programming services, including the Schoolwide Enrichment Model, in-class differentiation, and push-in enrichment. These services provide challenging opportunities in areas such as public speaking, mathematical thinking, creative problem solving, philosophical discourse, and STEAM. The district is committed to continuously identifying, nurturing, and enhancing the abilities and talents of its students. Additionally, we regularly assess the effectiveness and impact of their services to ensure ongoing improvement.

Philosophy

In Tenaflly Public Schools our goal is to provide a supportive and stimulating educational environment that recognizes and cultivates the unique potential of each learner, preparing them to make meaningful contributions to their communities and the world. We do this through:

- Inquiry based learning
- Challenging opportunities
- Technological integration
- Project-based learning
- Community engagement

Definition of Giftedness

In accordance with the "[*Strengthening Gifted and Talented Education Act*](#), Tenaflly Public Schools defines giftedness as "student who possesses or demonstrates a high level of ability in one or more content areas when compared to their chronological peers in the school district and who require modifications of their educational program if they are to achieve in accordance with their capabilities."

Screening and Identification

The identification of gifted students is based on multiple measures with no one assessment acting as a gatekeeper. Students are assessed annually throughout the course of the school-year. Measures vary based on grade level and what giftedness is being assessed. Gifted students are expected to perform in the top 3-5% of the **local population**. A student enrolled in the Gifted and Talented program who is experiencing difficulty in gifted/mainstream courses and/or no longer meets the pre-established criteria may be exited from the program.

Identification For General Ability 3rd grade - 5th grade

Identification for our gifted and talented general ability pull out classes takes place in May of 2nd grade. During the identification process, multiple measures are considered, including, but not limited to: in class assessments, standardized assessments, mastery of grade level skills, teacher recommendations, and observation of students exhibiting characteristics of giftedness.

New Students

Students entering the district after May of 2nd grade will be assessed the following school year. However, throughout the year, new students will have many opportunities to engage in enrichment activities both in and out of the classroom. Our classroom teachers will work to differentiate instruction in order to challenge our high ability students and will use strategies to amplify the content, process, and products of our already rigorous curriculum. Additionally, upon teacher observation and assessment scores, our gifted and talented teacher will consult with students and teachers as necessary.

Program Components

Grades K-2

Tenafly Public Schools approaches giftedness in grades Kindergarten through 2nd grade using the schoolwide enrichment model. All students will be provided with enrichment opportunities within the general education classroom. This will involve extending the standard curriculum to encompass adaptations for students who have already demonstrated proficiency in grade-level content, aiming to foster critical and creative thinking, logical reasoning, and problem-solving skills through project-based learning.

Grades 3-5

Schoolwide Enrichment:

Gifted students will be provided with enrichment opportunities within the general education classroom, which will involve extending the standard curriculum. These extensions encompass adaptations to the curriculum for students who have already demonstrated proficiency in grade-level content, aiming to foster critical and creative thinking, logical reasoning, and problem-solving skills through project-based learning.

Identified General Ability Gifted Learners:

In small group settings led by an instructor specializing in gifted and talented education, students will embark on year-long explorations centered on overarching themes. Grade 3: Systems, Grade 4: Mysteries, Grade 5: Impact. These themes will serve as a unifying framework, seamlessly blending together subjects like mathematics, science, social studies, and literacy. The program places a strong emphasis on project-based and self-directed learning approaches, cultivating a comprehensive educational journey.

Visual and/or Performing Arts:

Elementary school students will be able to engage in a vibrant and inventive arts program, encompassing fine and performing arts classes tailored for students in grades 3 through 5. Our specialists will offer specialized extension activities in their area of expertise to students throughout the year. Interested students may sign up for these classes as they become available.

Grades 6-8

Gifted students will be provided with enrichment opportunities within the regular education classroom, which will involve extending the standard curriculum. These extensions encompass adaptations to the curriculum for students who have already demonstrated proficiency in grade-level content, aiming to foster critical and creative thinking, logical reasoning, and problem-solving skills through project-based learning.

Starting 6th grade students can be selected to participate in advanced coursework including Math 7 Advanced*, Algebra 7, and Geometry. Course placement is determined by overall math performance and aptitude, teacher recommendation, and a placement exam. The placement exam is scheduled in the spring and all students in grades 5, 6, 7 are expected to participate. The Middle School Program of Studies specifies eligibility requirements for specific advanced courses in mathematics. There is a process for appeals and a waiver, explained in the TMS Program of Studies, but questions regarding the gifted determination should be addressed directly with the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction.

All students, including those identified as gifted, will have access to Counseling Services to assist with appropriate placement in middle school classes. Our counselors offer guidance and motivation for students to explore different club options aligned with their interests. Additionally, our counselors provide social and emotional support to all students, focusing on executive functioning skills, sensitivity, integrity, leadership, and other relevant topics tailored to students' needs. We offer a wide array of clubs, organizations, field trips, and competitive opportunities to help nurture each student's unique interests and strengths. Please contact your building principal for more information about offerings.

Grades 9-12

Gifted students will be provided with enrichment opportunities within the regular education classroom, which will involve extending the standard curriculum. These extensions encompass adaptations to the curriculum for students who have already demonstrated proficiency in grade-level content, aiming to foster critical and creative thinking, logical reasoning, and problem-solving skills through project-based learning.

Students identified as gifted or advanced learners in secondary grades will receive academic instruction at the honors and/or advanced placement level. The High School Program of Studies specifies eligibility requirements for specific advanced courses in all subject areas. There is a process for appeals and a waiver, explained in the THS

Program of Studies, but questions regarding the gifted determination should be addressed directly with the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction.

All students, including those identified as gifted, will have access to Counseling Services to assist with appropriate placement in high school classes. Our counselors offer guidance and motivation for students to explore different class and club options aligned with their interests and abilities. Additionally, our counselors provide social and emotional support to all students, focusing on executive functioning skills, sensitivity, integrity, leadership, and other relevant topics tailored to students' needs. We offer a wide array of classes, clubs, organizations, field trips, and competitive opportunities to help nurture each student's unique interests and strengths. Please contact your building principal for more information about offerings.

Questions/Concerns and Appeals Process

A parent/guardian requesting for their child to be reconsidered for admission into the gifted program must provide a written notification to the principal stating the request for appeal. Parents/guardians will be informed via email or verbal communication of the committee's decisions.

Final decisions on all appeals will be made by the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction. Please direct all inquiries to Ms. Brenda Yoo, byoo@tenafly.k12.nj.us

An individual who believes the district has not complied with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:35-34 et seq. may file a complaint with the Board of Education. This policy for filing a complaint shall be linked to the homepage of the Board's Internet website. The Board shall issue a decision, in writing, to affirm, reject, or modify the district's action in the matter. The individual may then file a petition of appeal of the Board's written decision to the Commissioner of Education through the Office of Controversies and Disputes in accordance with N.J.S.A.

18A:6-9 and the procedures set forth in State Board of Education regulations.

[Tenafly Board of Education's Policy Guide for Gifted and Talented.](#)

Resources for Teachers, Parents, and Students

National Association For Gifted Children- <https://nagc.org/>

New Jersey Council For Exceptional Children- <https://njcec.org/>

MENSA for Kids- <https://www.mensaforkids.org/>

The Gifted Child Society- <https://www.gifted.org/>

Supporting the Emotional Need Of Gifted Children-

<https://www.davidsongifted.org/prospective-families/social-emotional-resources/>