

TIGER TOTS

Early Learning Center

2026 - 2027

Parent Guide and Lottery Instructions



Tenaflly High School
Family & Consumer Science Department

Tiger Tots

Early Childhood Learning Center

Tenaflly Public Schools Family and Consumer Sciences Department
2026-2027

General Information

Welcome to Tiger Tots! Our program is designed to provide for the social, emotional, and academic development of all Tiger Tots participants. Please read through this guide carefully to familiarize yourself with the program and applicable guidelines and regulations.

A. Philosophy

Tiger Tots is a unique educational teens and tots program, combining a quality and engaging early childhood classroom with an opportunity for high school teenagers to learn by experience. Our preschoolers interact with other students in both free play and in structured learning activities that are planned, prepared, and conducted by our certified early childhood teacher with the support of the Tiger Tots classroom paraprofessionals and the Tenaflly High School students enrolled in the Child Psychology and Development Career and Tech Education program. Activities include music, arts and crafts, games, math, reading readiness, science, language arts, technology, physical education, and story time.

B. High School Interaction

Child Psychology and Development courses are part of Tenaflly High School's Family and Consumer Science Department. In these courses, high school students observe, work with, learn to teach, and care for preschool students. By combining regularly scheduled in-person class sessions with the ability to observe the tot classroom remotely, high school students currently enrolled in the CTE program are allowed to study the physical, intellectual, social, and emotional development of the preschool student. Classrooms are equipped with audio and video equipment to enable the students enrolled in the program to see and hear activities in the preschool classroom discreetly, using remote workstations during designated instructional times. Audio and video equipment in the classroom is used solely for activities related to the high school students' education and training.

C. Staff

The Tiger Tots program operates under Board of Education policies and procedures, and is administered through the Family and Consumer Science Department at Tenaflly High School. The classroom is staffed by a full-time certified early childhood teacher as well as qualified classroom paraprofessionals. All staff are appointed by the Board of Education, and must meet all of the Board's hiring and employment requirements.

D. Age and Other Requirements

Children who will be three years old by August 31, 2026, **and** who are FULLY toilet trained (can dress/undress and clean themselves, independently use and communicate their need to use the bathroom) are eligible for the program. Please be aware **that NO** pull-ups/diapers are permitted.

Note: Children will not be admitted to the Tiger Tots program if they are five years of age on or before October 15th of the year in which admission is requested, as they are eligible for Kindergarten admission.

Program Operation

- A. Location: The program is offered at Tenaflly High School.
- B. Facilities: The Tiger Tots classroom is a pleasant, well-lit, well-ventilated ground-floor room equipped with student-size tables, chairs, and age-appropriate play equipment. A safe, enclosed playground area has been specifically designed for the preschoolers' use. Toilet facilities are located within the classroom.
- C. Schedule: Program operates 7:30 am-5:00 pm every day that the high school is in full-day session. On scheduled early dismissal days, the program runs from 7:30 am to 11:30 am. The Tiger Tots "school day" begins at 8:45 am with the classroom morning meeting. To ensure positive transitions, support planned instruction, and minimize disruptions to the learning environment, students are expected to arrive before 8:45 AM. The TPS district calendar identifying the days when THS is in session is available on the TPS website at www.tenaflyschools.org.
- D. Emergency Closing: The Tiger Tots program will not operate when school is closed due to inclement weather or other emergencies. The Blackboard Notification/Alert System will notify parents/guardians of school closings. Infrequently, due to weather or other unanticipated circumstances, the school will close early. If this should occur, parents/guardians will be notified by telephone and will be expected to pick up their children by 11:30 am. In the event of a delayed opening, the Tiger Tots program will begin at 10:45 am. Please note that all parents/guardians will be required to provide emergency contact and pick-up options for their children at the time of registration.
- E. Arrival/Departure/Security: Tiger Tot drop-off is located at the exterior door adjacent to the principal's office. Tiger Tot's staff meet students at the exterior door and escort them to the classroom. In accordance with our security protocols, parents/guardians are not permitted to enter the building for drop-off. Students arriving after 8:45 must enter through the Tenaflly High School Visitor's Entrance located at the front of the building. At pick-up, students will not be released to any unauthorized person. Parents/guardians are required to specify in writing on the attached "Escort Authorization" form included in this guide who may pick up their student. Authorized individuals who are unknown to program staff are required to show a photo identification before a student will be released to their care.
- F. Lunch and Snack: Parents/guardians are responsible for providing a nutritious snack and lunch each day. These should be sent in an appropriate container with all necessary utensils and labeled with the student's name. A microwave oven and refrigerator are available for warming and storing lunches. Please do not send your student with soda, gum, candy, nut products, or junk food.
- G. Clothing: Label all clothing with your student's name. Children should be dressed appropriately for active play and daily weather conditions, including always wearing closed-toed shoes. No Crocs or open-toed sandals are allowed. Each student will be required to have a complete extra set of clothing in case an emergency arises. Such clothing should be kept seasonal and placed in a sealed plastic bag at the bottom of the student's backpack. If a student has an accident and the student does not have an extra set of clothing, arrangements must be made to pick up the student immediately upon notification. In addition, please provide a smock or oversized shirt for art activities.
- H. Rest: Children will have a supervised "rest time" each day. A mat will be provided, but

parents/ guardians must supply ONE cot or twin-size sheet. All items should be labeled with your student's name. Please do not send large blankets, pillows, or sleeping bags.

- I. Toys: Please do not send your student to school with any books or toys from home, except for use during Show and Tell.
- J. Discipline: The purpose of discipline is to encourage appropriate behavior. Tiger Tots uses positive guidance techniques to enhance a student's self-esteem. The interaction between the teachers, tots, and teenagers is very unique. Our carefully planned program encourages appropriate behavior.

Health and Safety

- A. Staff: The Tenaflly High School Health Office is staffed with two full-time health professionals - a certified school nurse and a licensed nurse. The office may be reached by phone at 201-816-6670 and by fax at 201-837-1035.
- B. Illness: It is necessary to protect the health of all school students and teachers. Therefore, Tiger Tots will not admit a student who has any of the following illnesses or symptoms of these illnesses:
 - 1. An oral morning temperature of 100 degrees or more. A student must be fever-free for 24 hours after medication has ceased.
 - 2. Conjunctivitis (pink eye) must be treated with antibiotic drops for 24 hours before the student can return to school.
 - 3. Sore throat, strep throat, or severe coughing.
 - 4. Upper respiratory infection and/or bronchitis.
 - 5. Vomiting or diarrhea.
 - 6. Impetigo or any undiagnosed or contagious rash. Please notify the school nurse of such.
 - 7. Contagious Diseases: Please notify the school nurse immediately. Re-admission to the program following a contagious disease (such as measles, chicken pox, mumps, roseola, or head lice) requires a physician's written statement certifying that the student no longer presents a health risk.
- C. Medication: All medication will be kept in a secure area in the nurse's office. The Tenaflly School District requires that all parents/guardians of students/students who need medication during program hours do the following:
 - 1. Parent/guardian must present the district with a [Medication Administration Form](#) completed by the prescribing physician and signed by the parent/guardian. You may request this form from the school nurse.
 - 2. Bring medication in the original container or prescription bottle, properly labeled by a registered pharmacist as prescribed by law.
 - 3. Verbally inform the school nurse and present the medication.
- D. In-School Illness/Emergency: Tiger Tots has a school nurse available. However, *a sick student may not remain in school*. Arrangements must be made to pick up the student immediately upon notification, any time he or she is ill. Please have a realistic alternate plan for your student in case you are unavailable.
- E. Notification of Absence: Please call the Tenaflly High School attendance office at 201-816-6623 by 9:00 am if your student will be absent.

- F. Medical Forms: Proof of immunizations and a doctor's report on the health of your student are required by the State of New Jersey. Forms are included in this guide. A current physical is valid if it was completed within 365 days of the start of school.

Delayed Opening, Early Dismissal, or Emergency School Closing

In the event of bad weather or emergency conditions, it is the Tenaflly Board of Education's policy that the Tenaflly Public Schools remain open unless a decision is made by the Superintendent of Schools to delay the opening of school or to close for the day. If the decision is to remain open, parents are to send their students to school at their discretion, depending on the weather and driving conditions. All staff members are expected to report to work as usual. Please make it a priority to sign up for our Blackboard Notification/Alert System on our website at www.tenafllyschools.org. Also, be sure to keep all your contact information updated in the event of an early dismissal.

If there is a delayed opening, early dismissal, or closing before the start of the school day, an announcement will be made via the following:

- Tenaflly Public Schools Website www.tenafllyschools.org

Additionally, please note:

- A fire siren will **not** sound in the event of a school closing.
- School office telephones will NOT be staffed until the delayed hour.
- If schools are closed during the day or dismiss early, all SACC, recreation programs, and any building use activities will be canceled for the day.

Delayed Opening

All schools open two (2) hours after their usual starting time as follows:
Elementary: 10:30am; TMS: 10:20am; THS: 10:10am; **Tiger Tots: 10:45am;**
PAWS: 11:00am; Cubs: AM Cancelled, PM 12:20pm; LLD: 10:30am

Early Dismissal

All schools dismiss at these times:
Elementary: 12:45pm; TMS: 12:30pm; THS: 12:45pm; **Tiger Tots: 11:30am;**
PAWS: 12:00pm; Cubs: AM 11:30am, PM Cancelled; LLD: 12:45pm

Lottery Application and Registration

Lottery Application

Registration for Tiger Tots is managed through a lottery system. Families interested in securing a spot in the program must submit a lottery application during the annual lottery window. Applications for the next school year are available on the district website for two weeks. Applications are available to Tenaflly residents and full-time Tenaflly Public Schools staff members seeking a full-time, five-day per week, early childhood program. Total enrollment is limited to 18 students. Parents of multiples (e.g. twins) should complete one lottery application, which, if selected, will receive the appropriate number of seats provided they remain available.

Drawing

After the lottery application window closes, all eligible families will receive a lottery number from the Tenaflly Public Schools registrar and will be entered into the lottery and advised of the drawing date, which will be scheduled for late January/early February (exact date TBD annually). All applications submitted before the deadline will receive an equal chance of selection. There will be no first-come, first-served consideration. Numbers will be drawn at random for a "seat" in the Tiger Tots classroom. Once all available seats are filled, remaining numbers will be drawn and assigned to a waitlist in the order they are drawn.

Registration

Following the lottery drawing, families will be contacted about their selection and/or placement on the waitlist at the phone number and email address provided on the lottery application. All families will be contacted no later than February 13th. If a family declines to register their child, fails to meet the registration deadline, or withdraws from the program, the open seat will go to the next family on the waitlist. The waitlist will remain active throughout the school year.

Registration fee, security deposit, and proof of age and residency are required at the time of registration and must be submitted during the registration window. Space will not be held for a student until the registration fee, security deposit, and required documentation are received, and will not be held beyond the registration window.

Special considerations

Children currently enrolled in Tiger Tots as 3-year-olds will be automatically enrolled for a second year unless the registrar is notified otherwise. Therefore, the number of available seats in the Tiger Tots classroom will vary from year to year depending upon the number of 3-year-olds choosing to continue in the program. Eligible siblings of those continuing Tots will receive priority registration. Siblings of 'graduating' Tots will not receive priority and will need to be part of the lottery.

Please note that in order to remain in the Tiger Tots program, students must maintain residency in Tenaflly and/or district employment status. Should either change, students may remain in the program for 30 calendar days. After 30 days, students will be disenrolled.

Orientation

An in-person orientation program for registered parents and children will be held in late spring of the preceding school year. Important information is distributed at the orientation so please make every effort to attend. Notification of the date will be emailed to the address provided during registration. For more information, please contact the following people:

Ms. Chanel Carela – Tiger Tots Teacher – ccarela@tenafly.k12.nj.us

Dr. Jennifer Ferrara – Vice Principal, Tenafly High School - jferrara@tenaflyk12.nj.us

Mr. Michael Ben-David – Superintendent of Schools - mbendavid@tenafly.k12.nj.us

Lottery Information



Lottery applications will be available on the
Tenaflly Public Schools website (see link below)
January 26th through **3:00 pm on February 9th, 2026,**
at which time the lottery window will close.

Incomplete applications will be removed from the lottery.

Applications will not be available, and submissions will not be accepted,
beyond this time.

[Tiger Tots Registration Information - 2026-2027](#)