TJHSST in A Nutshell

Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (TJHSST) is a unique Fairfax County public school that provides an innovative, specialized learning environment for highly motivated students who have a genuine interest in the biological, physical, mathematical, technological, and computer sciences.

Established in 1985 as the Regional Virginia Governor’s High School for Science and Technology, TJHSST is the result of a partnership of business and education created to improve education in science, technology and mathematics. Representatives from business and industry as well as staff of the Fairfax County Public Schools worked together in curriculum and facilities development for the school.

There are approximately 1,850 students expected to enroll at TJHSST for the 2016-2017 school year. All students (and applicants) must continually live with a parent or legal guardian who resides full-time in a participating Northern Virginia school division to be eligible to attend TJHSST. Participating school divisions presently include:

- Fairfax County
- Arlington County
- Falls Church City
- Loudoun County
- Prince William County

Most participating school divisions provide transportation for their students, but this may vary yearly and is at the discretion of each jurisdiction.

Admission to TJHSST

Selection of students for admission to Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology is through a competitive admissions process, which is overseen by the TJHSST Admissions Office. The vast majority of students attending the school enter as ninth graders. A very limited number of rising sophomores and juniors are selected for vacancies at these levels.

Through this admissions process, TJHSST is looking for highly-motivated students with exceptional quantitative skills who demonstrate:

- High ability, aptitude, and genuine interest in math, science, or technology;
- Intellectual curiosity and self-motivation to pursue scientific research;
- A desire to be challenged with an extensive curriculum focused in math, science, and technology;
- An interest in the relationship and integration between humanities and the sciences and technology;
- The highest academic and personal integrity;
- An aspiration to become a member of a community of learners, explorers, mentors, and leaders; and
- The capability to become citizens and leaders of the 21st century.

During this school year, approximately 480 students will be selected for next year's freshman class (TJHSST Class of 2021).

**Eligibility**

Students are eligible to apply to TJHSST provided that they meet all residency and course (Algebra 1) prerequisite requirements.

- **Residency**

  All applicants to TJHSST must, at the time of application, live with a parent or legal guardian who resides full time in, and meets the residency requirements of, a school division that participates in TJHSST. (FCPS Regulation 3355.12)

  The applicant and the parent/legal guardian must actually reside (be present) in the participating school division at the time of application. If a parent owns property here, but does not actually live here, the student is not eligible to apply to TJHSST unless and until the parent and the student actually reside here.

  **Please Note:** The cities of Alexandria, Manassas, and Manassas Park and Fauquier County do not currently participate in TJHSST. Students who live in those school divisions are not eligible to apply to, or attend, TJHSST. Applicants who move to one of these school divisions (or to any non-participating school division) are not eligible to continue in the admissions process and will be withdrawn from consideration for admission.

- **Algebra 1 Prerequisite**

  FCPS Regulation 3355.12, which governs TJ admissions, provides with regard to the Algebra 1 prerequisite that:

  Enrollment in Algebra 1 or a higher level mathematics course in grade 8 is a condition of eligibility. Under special circumstances, students enrolled in Math 8 in grade eight may apply if, prior to the application deadline, the student obtains prior written approval from the admissions director.

  Students who are enrolled in Math 8 may be allowed to apply only if they can demonstrate both: (a) exceptional academic performance in Math 7; and (b) special circumstances (for example, if the school the student attends in grade 8 does not offer Algebra 1 to its 8th graders – primarily private school applicants). We have found that absent such special circumstances, students who are not enrolled in at least Algebra 1 in grade 8 have not been successful in our admissions process.

  Information on how a student may request a waiver of the Algebra 1 requirement can be found on the admissions website and through the online application process. (This waiver is available for Winter Round applicants only.)
OVERVIEW OF THE FRESHMAN ADMISSIONS PROCESS

TJHSST and its admissions process are governed by School Board Policy 3355.4. The selection and admissions process is specified in FCPS Regulation 3355.12 and Notice 3355. All are available at www.fcps.edu.

Students apply to TJHSST for the ninth grade (freshman year) during 8th grade. There are two rounds of freshman admissions:

1. **Winter Round** is for all students who live in a participating school division before September 30, 2016. If a student is living in any participating school division before that date, they must apply during the winter round admissions process.

2. **Summer Round** is only for students who move to a participating school division on or after September 30, 2016. (It is not for students who move from one participating school division to another during the course of the school year.)

**WINTER ROUND**

There are two parts, or stages, to the admissions process. Part One is relevant to all applicants. Part Two is for students who are determined to be semifinalists at the conclusion of Part One (in January 2017).

- **PART ONE**

  Eighth-grade students apply to TJ no later than October 14, 2016, by completing the application and paying a processing fee of $90. Students who are eligible for free and reduced-price meals pay a processing fee of $25. A waiver of the fee (no fee) also is available through the online process, by contacting the student’s middle school TJ Liaison Counselor or by calling the Admissions Office at 571-423-3770.

  All applicants then must take the Thomas Jefferson Admissions Test, which will be administered on Saturday, December 3, 2016. The test is a standardized reasoning test that measures how well a student can use knowledge gained over his/her previous seven years of formal schooling. It is not an achievement test.

  In mid-January following the test, applicants are informed by email through the online application system whether or not they will be considered as semifinalists. Grade point average (GPA) and test scores are used to determine semifinalist status.

- **PART TWO**

  During Part Two of the admissions process, semifinalists will prepare and submit the Student Information Sheet and Essay in a proctored test environment. Semifinalists must also request two teacher recommendations to be completed by mid-February.
All semifinalist packets will undergo a comprehensive, holistic evaluation of the following components, by a minimum of five (5) reviewers:

- Student Information Sheet
- Essay
- Teacher Recommendations (2 – one math or science and one ‘other’)
- GPA in math and science (7th grade final marks, 1st and 2nd quarter 8th grade marks)
- Admissions Test Scores in mathematics and verbal
- GPA for all core subjects (to include high school credit classes) 7th grade final marks and 1st quarter 8th grade marks

Each semifinalist packet also contains a demographic page that includes the student’s name, school attended, ethnicity, test scores, GPA’s listed above, current math class being taken as well as highest level of math class available for the specific school at his or her school.

Final admissions decisions will be based on final evaluative holistic reviews for semifinalists. Approximately 480 students will be offered admission to the Class of 2021. A wait pool of additional students will also be established. (Students will be offered admission from the wait pool in July, if spaces are available.)

All semifinalists are notified no later than April 30 whether or not they will be offered admission. Each school’s liaison counselor will be able to view the list of students offered admission through the Staff Portal School Contact “Finalist” tab. They will have this information to share with their Principal at the time the information is released to the applicants and families.

**SUMMER ROUND**

A summer round of admissions is available for students who move to the area after September 30, 2016. Students who lived in a participating school division before September 30, 2016, and missed the October 14, 2016, application deadline may NOT apply for Summer Round.

The application process and the selection process for the summer round are similar to the winter round except for the deadline and testing dates. Also, the teacher recommendations are due at the time of the Summer Round application deadline.
THE TJ TEST

All applicants to the freshman class at TJ must take the “TJ Test,” the Specialized High School Admissions Test (SHSAT). The test is a two-hour standardized multiple-choice exam produced for TJHSST Admissions by Pearson Assessments. The test measures verbal and math reasoning skills. The verbal section of the test includes scrambled paragraphs, logical reasoning, and reading comprehension. The math section includes word and computational problems.

The test is always on the first Saturday in December (this year, December 3, 2016). On test day, students take the two-hour SHSAT. The Student Information Sheet and Essay will be prepared and submitted by the majority of Semifinalist Applicants in a proctored test environment on January 28, 2017.

Test Sites All applicants, with the exception of the City of Falls Church, must test at a location within their jurisdiction (county). Seventeen schools serve as testing sites for the Saturday test administration. (Trailside MS in Loudoun County is a new test site for this year.) Students select their test sites on their applications and the Admissions Office will verify that the applicant has selected a site located within their jurisdiction. If a “special consideration” is requested to test outside of their county of residence, then they must contact the Admissions Office prior to submitting the application. Applicants will not be able to complete the process without selecting a test site.

Test Sites this year are: Arlington County – Swanson; Fairfax County – Carson, Frost, Glasgow, Hughes, Jackson, Kilmer, Liberty, Longfellow, Rocky Run, Sandburg, South County, and Twain; Loudoun County – Lunsford, Stone Hill and Trailside; Prince William County – Benton. If your school is a test site, you will receive required training on Thursday, October 27, 2016, from 1:00 - 3:00 p.m., at the Gatehouse Administrative Center, Suite 5055.

If your school is a test site, you will need to reserve in advance the rooms in your building needed for the test date, Saturday, December 3, 2016, AND for the inclement weather date, Saturday, December 10, 2016. Reserve all rooms from about 7:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. Because SIS and Essays will also be given at the same site that students selected for the December test, please also reserve January 28 and February 11 (inclement weather) for the SIS and Essay Administration.

Test Information/Test Site Confirmation

All applicants receive test information from the Admissions Office a minimum of one week before the test day in December. All applicants will receive testing details and other communication electronically.
Testing Accommodations and Alternate Date Testing

**Testing Accommodations**

**Accommodations Testing:** Students who have an IEP, 504 Plan, LSAPP or other formal written educational plan, who require testing accommodations, and students who require, or may require, medical testing and/or medication (e.g., for diabetes) during testing may, or may not, take the admissions test on December 3, 2016.

Students who request accommodations, however, may be requested to take the admissions test at one specific location on December 3. All accommodations will be reviewed on an individual basis and the determination made whether they will test on December 3 or the alternate test date of December 9, 2016, at the designated accommodation test site, based upon which date will provide the best environment for the student.

All students with accommodations will write their Student Information Sheet and Essay in late January 2017 or early February 2017 if they qualify for the semifinalist pool.

**Requesting Accommodations:** If a student requires testing accommodations, his/her parents must contact the Admissions Office prior to the application deadline to arrange for the testing accommodations. Parents are instructed to complete the form via the Online Application Process and submit as directed.

A copy of the applicant's IEP, 504 plan, LSAPP or other formal written educational plan that addresses testing accommodations, or a copy of relevant medical documentation (such as a copy of their Medical Authorization form filed with their school clinic or a letter from their treating physician), must be attached to the form.

All testing accommodations must be pre-approved by the Admissions Office.

**Alternate Date Testing**

**Alternate Date Testing:** Applicants who cannot test on December 3, 2016, for religious reasons must contact the Admissions Office prior to the application deadline to arrange for an alternate test date.

Students who require an alternate test date will take the admissions test instead on Friday, December 9, 2016, at the designated alternate date test site. (This is also the make-up test date for students who are sick on test day.)

**Requesting an Alternate Test Date:** Parents are instructed to complete the Request for Alternate Date Testing form via the Online Application Process and submit as directed. A copy of supporting documentation must be attached to the form.

**NOTE:** Alternate date testing is available for students who cannot test for religious reasons (e.g., Sabbath, confirmation, etc.), for students who are ill on December 3, 2016, and for students with accommodations. Students who contact the Admissions Office following the test indicating that they were ill on test day will be required to provide a doctor's note in order to be considered for testing on the Alternate Test Date. Field trips, athletic contests, etc., are not legitimate reasons to request an alternate test date. These dates have been posted on the admissions website since July to avoid conflicting schedules.
Test Preparation

The best preparation for the TJ test is to have taken challenging courses in elementary and middle school, to read a great deal, and to do math problems beyond those required in class. A Student Handbook that describes the test, provides test-taking strategies, and includes a complete sample test, is available for applicants to familiarize themselves with the test content.

Parents and students can download the handbook from the TJHSST Admissions website: [www.TJAdmissions.org](http://www.TJAdmissions.org). If any of your students do not have access to a computer, please print out copies for their use.

**NOTE:** Student Handbooks are NOT available at TJHSST or at the TJ Admissions Office.

There are test preparation courses available in the community for interested students. (The Admissions Office does not endorse or recommend any particular test preparation courses.) The FCPS Office of Adult and Community Education (ACE) has made information available about its test preparation programs, which will be offered in two sessions (September and October) at various sites in Fairfax County. The courses are available to all interested students (out-of-county students pay a higher fee for the course). Students may register by FAX, by mail, or online. Classes fill quickly and interested students should be encouraged to register immediately. Information on the test prep course can be found in the Fall ACE Classes, which is mailed to all homes in Fairfax County, and on the FCPS website at: [https://aceclasses.fcps.edu](https://aceclasses.fcps.edu)

Students can do a lot on their own to prepare for the test. Additional information on such preparation can be found on the admissions website at [www.TJAdmissions.org](http://www.TJAdmissions.org).
Month-By-Month Timeline for Liaison Counselors

Freshman Admissions
Winter Round
September 2016

In September, liaison counselors are responsible for (a) publicizing the admissions process, (b) verifying math class for applicants, (c) fielding questions, and (d) assisting students and parents by perhaps setting up a computer lab (or computer cart) where families may come to the school to use computers and be assisted with the process.

Application Availability

TJHSST Admissions Online Applications become available on September 19, 2016. The online system provides e-mail notifications including final decisions throughout the entire process.

Publicizing the Admissions Process

Local schools share with the TJHSST Admissions Office the responsibility for publicizing the admissions process. It is very important that you publicize the availability of applications online and information about the admissions process to everyone in your school community.

The most current site for sharing news about the admissions process is through our website www.TJAdmissions.org. Our website is maintained through our office and can be updated daily if required.

The admissions staff will be giving presentations to approximately 50 middle schools throughout all five jurisdictions in order to publicize the process and be available to answer any and all questions.

Liaison counselors also can take the following steps to publicize the process.

- Consider using the prepared notices contained in this handbook (pp. 20-21) in school newsletters, PTA/PTO newsletters, daily announcements, and principals’ communications with students, parents, faculty, and staff. Contact the Admissions Office if you would like an electronic version of these documents to customize.

- Refer questions to Admissions Office at 571-423-3770 or tjadmissions@fcps.edu

- Open House – This year it will be held in early April. You will find information regarding publicizing this event in your March 2017 page of the timeline.
Fielding Questions

The liaison counselor often is the first person to whom parents turn when they have questions about the admissions process. If you cannot answer any particular question, please have the parent call or e-mail (tjadmissions@fcps.edu) the Admissions Office (571-423-3770) for assistance.

It will save valuable staff time if the right person (you, the liaison counselor) can be contacted directly without first routing a call to the principal's or student services director's office. A sample handout, which includes important deadlines, for distribution to school office staff and office volunteers is included in this handbook (p. 23-24). If your school office staff is well informed about application deadlines and other pertinent information, they may be able to handle many calls without referring them to any other staff member (including you!).

Assisting the Applicant and Parents

The liaison counselor can receive a high volume of calls/e-mails with questions about TJ and its admissions process early in the school year. To minimize the number of individual contacts in which the same information is given to each applicant and/or to parents, the liaison counselor might consider scheduling a single meeting with applicants and their parents to provide the necessary information and instruction, usually before applications are due October 14, 2016.

You also may wish to consider distributing a letter to applicants and parents similar to the sample one contained on pages 22-23 providing an overview to the admissions process.

Counselors may receive assistance with presentations to parents and students from the Admissions Office. Admissions staff is more than happy to come to your school to make a presentation about TJ and its admissions process to interested students and/or parents. These presentations can be scheduled at any time during the school day or in the evening (e.g., in conjunction with Back-to-School Night or a PTA meeting).

At parent/student meetings, liaison counselors may wish to remind parents and applicants (even more than once) about the importance of timely submission of the application through the online process. If an applicant has started the process but has not completed all screens by October 7, 2016, they will be sent a reminder e-mail that the application has not been completed.

Counselors also may want to stress to parents that application to TJHSST is very competitive and should be undertaken with the understanding that no particular prior testing, grade point average, or advanced academic program participation automatically qualifies a student for acceptance. Each year, some who assume acceptance are disappointed. Only one applicant in six (approximately) is accepted to TJHSST.
October 2016

In October, liaison counselors are responsible for verifying math requirements for students, forwarding Money Order payments only, and authorizing fee reduction or fee waivers. Students initially complete online only the completed application form and the processing fee. Private school students also must provide proof of residency with their applications. In the online system, we have established a table for ‘School Contacts’ (Liaison Counselors) for each public and private school. It is important that you, the liaison counselor, be the only one to verify the math requirement and monitor the online applicants.

Counselor’s Checklist for Processing Online Applications

As soon as an online applicant enters their minimum information (page 1 of the app), his/her name will appear on the ‘School Contact Portal’. Please verify the math requirement. Once you have verified the math requirement, a system generated e-mail will be sent to the applicant and parent advising them to complete the application process. If a student/parent requests a reduced fee or fee waiver, you will also have the ability in the online process to authorize that request.

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<tr>
<th>Processing Fee</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Online applicants have the choice of credit/debit card, eCheck, or Money Order (that will be forwarded by the Liaison Counselor).</strong> Please make sure that the money orders are made out to “Fairfax County Public Schools” or to “FCPS” (NOT to TJHSST). Money orders made out to TJ will be returned to you for replacement. <strong>We will not accept cash payments.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If the money order is made out to TJHSST</td>
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<tr>
<td>If the student’s last name is different from the parent’s last name on the money order</td>
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</table>
Proof of Residency (Private School Students Only)

All applicants who are not enrolled in a public middle school in a TJHSST participating school division must provide proof of residency with their applications.

Required Proof of Residency

Private school students must submit three forms of proof at the time of application available through the online process:

- Copy of one of the following: current lease, current deed, or current mortgage statement AND
- Copy of one of the following: current gas, electric, water, or land-line telephone bill AND
- Copy of one of the following: Virginia driver’s license; current payroll stub; or current bank statement
If a student and the student’s parent(s) are living with relatives and do not have some of the documentation listed on the previous page, please contact the Admissions Office before October 14, 2016, for the required forms to document the specific residency circumstance.

If a student does not live in a participating school division, the student is NOT eligible to apply to TJHSST.

Test Site Supervisor Training

If your school is a test site, you must attend Test Site Supervisor Training on:

**Thursday, October 27, 2016**
1:00 - 3:00 p.m.
Gatehouse Administrative Center, Suite 5055

This is a mandatory meeting for Test Site Supervisors.

November 2016

In November there are no required tasks for most liaison counselors (unless, of course, you are a test site in December).

Test Confirmation

Testing information is sent in late November through the online system to all applicants confirming their test site and providing the student with his/her I.D. number.

- Students are assigned to the test site they choose on their applications, unless they selected a test site outside of their jurisdiction (county) and the Admissions Office reassigns them to a different test site. They may have requested “special consideration” of a different test site that was approved by the Admissions Office.

- FCPS students use their FCPS I.D. number. All other students are assigned an I.D. number through their Applicant Portal. (Those I.D. numbers begin with the letter “B”.)

**Missing Test Day Information?** You may receive inquiries in November from anxious parents looking for their test confirmation. Online applicants will receive their testing information via their Applicant Portal in e-mail format at least a week prior to testing.
In December, students take the admissions test and liaison counselors assist the Admissions Office with marks reporting for all applicants.

**Admissions Test**

The Admissions Test is Saturday, December 3, 2016. Please encourage your students to get a good night’s sleep the night before the test, to eat a good breakfast on test day, and to relax. Last-minute cramming is not useful.

If the test is postponed because of inclement weather, it will be given the following Saturday, December 10, 2016, at the same time and at the same locations. No additional e-mails or newsletters are sent regarding the makeup testing. (All applicants receive information about inclement weather in their test e-mail.)

**Students who are ill on Test Day:** Parents of students who are ill on test day must call the Admissions Office on Monday, December 5, 2016, to make arrangements for alternate-date testing. A doctor’s note must be received by the Admissions Office in order for the Alternate Test Date to be considered.

We tell applicants NOT to come to the test if they are sick (please encourage this on your end as well, since you likely will see each of them the day before test day). Please be aware that before testing begins, every student must sign their answer sheet affirming that they are well enough to take the test. There are no “do-overs” of the test.

**Marks Reporting – Final 7th & 1st Quarter 8th**

**FCPS Counselors:** FCPS marks are loaded directly to our database from SASI/SIS and FCPS liaison counselors assist the Admissions Office in verifying grades. We will contact you when there are questions or issues that need to be addressed. Please note that only your SIA can input marks for a student. You will need to work closely with him or her to ensure that all required marks are provided for applicants.

**Non-FCPS Counselors:** You will be directed to enter grades directly into the online system for your applicants. Please be sure to enter all marks in a timely fashion.

**January 2017**

Applicants are notified of their semifinalist status on January 13, 2017, and liaison counselors begin to monitor the requirements for the semifinalists. All liaison counselors will be able to view a list of their students who are in the semifinalist pool through their portal at the “Semifinalist” tab. Also, Non-FCPS counselors will begin entering second quarter eighth grade marks, as they did for final seventh grade and first quarter marks, which are due in mid-February.
Teacher Recommendation Information

All semifinalists must enter the teacher names and email addresses into the online system no later than Friday, January 27 at 4:00 p.m. Semifinalists will submit this information through the Applicant Portal and notifications will automatically be sent to the teachers being requested to write recommendations.

Informing Teachers about Writing Good Recommendations

The teachers' recommendations are a vital component in the selection process. It is a requirement that one recommendation be from the applicant’s 7th or 8th grade mathematics or science teacher. The second recommendation must come from a teacher from 7th or 8th grade chosen by the applicant.

All teacher recommendation forms will be completed through the Staff Portal of the online system. Please remind your teachers who may be writing recommendations that they will begin receiving e-mail requests after semifinalist notifications are released on Friday, January 13, 2017. The teacher deadline for completing and submitting recommendations is Monday, February 13 at 4:00 p.m.

You can further assist the teachers at your school by encouraging all of your semifinalists to ask teachers for recommendations at their earliest opportunity (before the January 27 deadline). Because the turnaround time for writing recommendations is relatively short, teachers will appreciate having as much time as possible to complete their forms.

As you have opportunities to talk with teachers about recommendations, please emphasize to teachers that their honest evaluation and comments are vital and that they should carefully complete the entire form. Emphasize as well that we want to see anecdotal comments which demonstrate that the teacher truly knows the student. Teachers also need to be aware that their lack of comments can adversely affect a student’s evaluation as well as using a template for all students may have an adverse effect.

Informing Students about Completing the Student Information Sheet and Essays

All semifinalists will complete their Student Information Sheet (SIS) and Essay using a computer in a proctored test environment in late January or early February, the date assigned may depend upon whether or not the student requires accommodations for these components of the process. The students will return to their original test site to complete the SIS and Essay unless otherwise instructed by the Admissions Office. Complete instructions will be provided through the Applicant Portal for applicants. The Student Information Sheet and Essay will cover four prompts that are mandatory to answer. The students will have two hours to respond. The first three prompts will each be allocated up to 1650 characters (approximately 380 words) per question. The fourth prompt will be the essay question with up to 3700 characters (approximately 800 words).
February 2017

In February, liaison counselors are responsible for monitoring their School Contact Portal Semifinalist List as the applicants progress through the second stage of the admissions process.

Marks Reporting – 2\textsuperscript{nd} Quarter

**FCPS Counselors:** FCPS marks will be loaded directly to our database from SASI/SIS and counselors once again will assist the Admissions Office in verifying grades. The biggest issue at this stage of the process is incomplete second quarter marks. Your assistance is greatly appreciated in following up to resolve incompletes for the students at your school.

**Non-FCPS Counselors:** You will be directed to enter grades directly into the online system for your online applicants.

Submissions by Semifinalists

All semifinalists must follow up with the teachers they have contacted to write recommendations to make sure these recommendations have been completed and submitted. As the liaison counselor, you will have the ability to view the status of these recommendations through your School Contact Portal Semifinalist List. Once a recommendation is completed and submitted, there will be a small radio button that will contain a ‘checkmark’.

Please see the following checklist summary.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Second Round Document Checklist</th>
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<tr>
<td>➢ The <strong>Student Information Sheet and Essay</strong> is completed in a test environment and you have no role in following up on this piece of the process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ <strong>Teacher Recommendations are due no later than Monday, February 13, 2017.</strong> All recommendations are prepared and submitted through the Teacher Portal of the online system.</td>
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March 2017

In early March post information regarding Open House on April 1.

- Remind students and parents about the Open House on Saturday, April 1, 2017. As we update this handbook, we fully expect that Open House will be held at TJ in 2017. We have been notified that the renovation should be complete or, at least, at a point where we will be able to return to TJ for the event. Needless to say, we are expecting crowds that will be very large since TJ will be showcasing its new building.

April 2017

While our regulation mandates all decisions are released no later than April 30, it is our hope that the decisions will be finalized earlier than the published decision date.

Notification to Students

Decision letters will be posted on the Applicant Portal no later than April 30, 2017, whether or not they are offered admission to TJHSST. Applicants will be directed to go to their Applicant Portal to view their decision. Admitted students receive additional information they will need regarding Freshman Registration.

Notification to Schools

The TJ liaison counselor should check the ‘Finalist’ tab in the School Contact Portal for final decisions. This information will be released at the same time the applicants and parents are able to view the decisions.

Please maintain the security and confidentiality of this information at all times.

- Please inform your Principal of the final decisions.
- If a student comes to you requesting their decision because they were unable to access their Applicant/Parent Portal, please have them contact the Admissions Office.
Counseling Students Not Selected

Every year, there are students and parents who are disappointed with the admissions decision. Counselors may wish to offer to meet with non-accepted applicants and/or their parents to provide information and/or clarification about the process, or to provide an opportunity for applicants and/or parents to talk with trained personnel as a means of dealing with their disappointment. Please remember (and remind your students) that the TJHSST Admissions process is extremely competitive. Only one in every six applicants is offered admission. Because there is a limit on the number of students who can be accepted each year (approximately 480), we unfortunately cannot offer admission to all of the many qualified, hard-working students who apply.

Counselors also may wish to offer non-accepted applicants an opportunity to discuss their program of study and schedule for the following year at their local high school. Some students may need to adjust course selections. Some of these students also may want to consider applying for admission to the sophomore class at TJHSST and will need to take the requisite classes in 9th grade as well as the PSAT or SAT to insure that they are competitive in the sophomore admissions process. Information about this process is provided on the admissions website.

May - June 2017

Summer Round Assistance – As Needed

Liaison counselors may be asked to assist 8th grade students who moved into their school division on or after September 30, 2016, and who have decided to apply to TJHSST during the summer round of admissions. The application deadline for those students is Friday, May 26, 2017.

Liaison counselors assist 8th grade students from their schools who are summer round applicants until school is out for the summer. After that date, applicants may obtain assistance from the Admissions Office. The process will be the same as the Winter Round with the exception that teacher recommendations are due at the time of the Summer Round application deadline.

Thank you for a great admissions year!

We cannot do our jobs without you.
Sample Newsletter Article

Applications for the 2017-2018 school year at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (TJHSST) will be available Monday, September 19, 2016, through the Online Application System. Part 1 of the application should be completed by Friday, October 7, 2016, with the application submitted by Friday, October 14, 2016, 4:00 p.m. There are no exceptions to the October 14, 2016, deadline.

If you are interested in a high school experience with an added emphasis on science, technology, and math, then TJHSST is a high school option you should consider. You can find more information regarding TJHSST at its website: www.TJHSST.edu. You can find more information regarding the admissions process at: www.TJAdmissions.org.

Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (TJHSST) is a unique Fairfax County public high school offering a comprehensive college preparatory program emphasizing the sciences, mathematics, and technology. The school serves students selected on the basis of aptitude and interest in the biological, physical, mathematical, and computer sciences and who intend to pursue college preparation in the sciences, engineering, or related fields. The admission process is competitive. Transportation to the school is provided by each participating public school jurisdiction.

TJHSST has an eight-period school day that begins at 8:40 a.m. and ends at 4:00 p.m. Seven periods are devoted to academic coursework. The eighth period of the day is designated for student activities, including club meetings, tutoring, speakers, guidance activities, and extra programs in the performing arts. Students do not attend every course every day. Flexible scheduling which maximizes learning experiences permits all classes to meet for double periods each week.

A distinguishing characteristic of Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology is its specialized technology laboratories. They are designed to enhance the academic curriculum as well as to provide students with unique learning experiences in state-of-the-art technological environments, opportunities for independent research and experimentation, and interaction with professionals from the scientific, engineering, technological, and industrial communities.

(Note to Editors of School Newsletters: This article may be shortened to fit the space available by eliminating paragraphs in reverse order beginning with the last paragraph)
SAMPLE ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR DAILY
OR WEEKLY BULLETINS AND FOR
P.A. ANNOUNCEMENTS

(In late September - early October 2016)
Applications for Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology are now available through the
Online Application System at www.TJAdmissions.org.

(Week of October 10-14, 2016)
Interested students are reminded that completed applications for freshman applicants for Thomas Jefferson
High School for Science and Technology must be submitted no later than Friday, October 14, 2016, 4:00
p.m. There are no exceptions to this deadline.

(Week of January 23-27, 2017)
Students who are semifinalists for Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology are reminded
that Teacher Recommendation Information is due to be entered into the online system by 4:00 p.m., Friday,
January 27.

(Week of February 6-10, 2017)
Teachers are reminded that all recommendations for students applying to TJHSST are due via the Staff
Portal of the Online Admissions System, no later than Monday, February 13, 2017, at 4:00 p.m.
SAMPLE LETTER FOR PARENTS OF FRESHMAN APPLICANTS

Dear Parents/Guardians:

The information contained in this letter is to assist you in the process of applying for ninth-grade admission to Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (TJHSST). For complete information, please refer to the admissions website www.TJAdmissions.org.

I. APPLICATION FORM

Online applications are available through the admissions website listed above. The application deadline for applicants is Friday, October 14, 2016, at 4:00 p.m.

II. ADMISSIONS TESTING

Freshman-class applicants are required to take the TJHSST admissions examination at the test site chosen by the applicant on the application form. Students should report to the chosen test site on Saturday, December 3, 2016, between 8:00 and 8:15 a.m., with three sharpened, black lead (No. 2). The test will end at approximately 11:00 a.m. At each test site, there will be signs indicating where students are to report.

The admissions test is a standardized, multiple-choice aptitude battery consisting of math and verbal reasoning—45 verbal questions and 50 math questions. A Student Handbook for the Admissions Test for Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology is also available from the TJHSST admissions website listed above. This 55-page handbook, which you can download and print, provides a sample of the standardized test. If you do not have access to a computer, (designated counselor) in our school may be able to print you a copy.

In case of inclement weather on the test date requiring an announced closure of schools, the examination will be held on the following Saturday (December 10, 2016) at the same time and same locations. A makeup testing date also will be scheduled for applicants with documented medical reasons for missing the regular test date.

Applicants who (a) require testing accommodations due to conditions documented in an IEP, LSAPP or 504 plan, (b) may require medication or medical monitoring during testing, or (c) require an alternate test date due to religious reasons, must make arrangements with the Office of Admissions prior to the application deadline. The accommodations and alternate test date forms are available through the Applicant Portal.

III. RECOMMENDATION FORMS

After the results from the admissions test are available, the number of applicants will be reduced to a semifinalist pool. Applicants will enter, through the online system, the names and e-mail addresses of the teachers they wish to write recommendations. One teacher must be a 7th or 8th grade math or science teacher and one may be “other” than a math or science teacher. The deadline to enter the teacher information is Friday, January 27, 2017, 4:00 p.m.

IV. STUDENT INFORMATION SHEET/ESSAY FORM

Each student in the semifinalist pool will complete the Student Information Sheet and Essay in a proctored test setting in late January or early February.
V. NOTIFICATION OF SELECTION DECISIONS

Final admissions decisions will be based on review of the teacher recommendations, the student information sheet/essay, GPA for core subjects (7th final and 8th grade first quarter) and for math/science (7th grade final, 8th grade first and second quarter) and test scores from the Admissions Test (both math and verbal scores).

Applicants will receive their decisions through e-mail notification in the online system no later than April 30, 2017.

Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology
Admissions Information for School Staff

The following information may help you field general questions about admissions to Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (TJ). If the question is more detailed, you should forward the inquiry to ________________, who is the TJ liaison counselor for our school.

Applications

- Applications are available online September 19, 2016, at www.TJAdmissions.org.
- Applications must be submitted on October 14, 2016, by 4:00 p.m.
- **No applications are accepted after 4:00 p.m. on October 14, 2016, for any reason.**

Learning More about TJ

- Open House will be in April 1, 2017, and will be held at TJHSST. More information will be made available when the date draws nearer.
- TJ Website is: www.tjhsst.edu
- TJ Admissions Website is: www.TJAdmissions.org

TJ Test

- TJ Test is Saturday, December 3, 2016. Inclement weather date is Saturday, December 10, 2016 (Same test sites; same test hours as December 3).
- All applicants will receive a test day email, confirming their application and test site, no later than the week before the test. There is no further information sent for the snow date.
- If a student needs accommodations for testing (because of an IEP, 504 Plan or LSAPP), he/she must complete the forms as part of the online application.
- If a student needs an alternate test date (because he/she cannot test on December 3 due to religious reasons), he/she must complete the forms as part of the online application.
- If a student is sick on test date, he/she should not attend. Parent must call the TJ Admissions Office on Monday, December 3, 2016, at 571-423-3770, to make alternative test-date arrangements.
Important Dates

- September 19, 2016  Winter Round application becomes available
- October 14, 2016  Application Deadline (NO EXCEPTIONS)
- December 3, 2016  Test Day
- December 10, 2016  Inclement Weather Test Day
- January 13, 2017  Semifinalist pool notification posted online
- January 27, 2017  Teacher recommendation names and email addresses must be entered into online system
- January 28, 2017  SIS and Essay Administration Day
- February 11, 2017  Inclement Weather Day SIS and Essay Administration
- February 13, 2017  Teacher recommendations must be submitted by 4:00 PM
- April 1, 2017  Open House – TJHSST (9:00 – 12:00)
- April 30, 2017  Final Admissions decisions posted – no later than

TJ Admissions Office

- Phone number:  571-423-3770
- Office hours:  Monday – Friday, 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM
- FAX number:  571-423-3777
- Mailing Address:  TJHSST Admissions Office
  8115 Gatehouse Rd.
  Falls Church, VA 22042