

INSTRUCTION

Special Programs

Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology

This regulation supersedes Regulation 3355.9.

I. PURPOSE

To establish TJHSST as a Fairfax County public school and as one of the academic-year regional governor's schools for science and technology.

II. SUMMARY OF CHANGES SINCE LAST PUBLICATION

- A. Section V.A.3. has been changed to modify the methods and instruments of measurement with regard to use of grade point average and individual marks at the various stages of the freshman admissions process.
- B. Section V.A.3. has been changed to require two teacher recommendations instead of three for the freshman admissions process.
- C. Section V.A.5.c.(2) has been changed to require a new sliding scale and a minimum math score for semifinalist pool eligibility. Additional modifications were made for clarity and consistency with other sections of the regulation.
- D. Section V.A.5.c. has been changed to reflect modifications of the procedures used in the final selection process. A wait list also has been established.
- E. Section V.A.6. admissions has been modified to reflect a change in the calendar for the summer round.
- F. Section V.B.1. has been modified for clarity.
- G. Section VI. has been modified for clarity.
- H. Section VII. has been modified for clarity.

III. DESIGNATION AS A FAIRFAX COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL

Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology is a Fairfax County public school, having opened in 1985 under the sole direction and control of the Fairfax County School Board. As a Fairfax County Public Schools institution, all policies and regulations governing Fairfax County Public Schools are applicable to TJHSST, with exceptions listed in this regulation and in annual notices issued in connection with this regulation.

IV. DESIGNATION AS AN ACADEMIC-YEAR GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology is annually designated by the Virginia Department of Education as an academic-year regional governor's school for science and technology. Such designation:

- A. Provides certain state funding for the operation of the school.
- B. Requires that the school be available to eligible students whose parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s) is a full-time resident(s) of, and meets all the residency requirements of, the counties and cities of Northern Virginia under the following provisions:
 - 1. That each of the school divisions decides annually whether or not to participate in the regional school. School divisions choosing to participate are designated as cooperating school divisions.
 - 2. That eligible students from each cooperating school division may apply and be considered for admission to the school. The Division Superintendent may return a student to the cooperating jurisdiction with a prorated share of the tuition reimbursed.
 - 3. That the percentage of students admitted as part of any entering class from any cooperating school division outside Fairfax County will not exceed the percentage represented by that school division's portion of the entire population, as of the end of the last school year, at the grade level for which entrants are being determined.
- C. Requires a cooperative agreement regarding such control and operation of the school, which includes, but is not restricted to, provisions that:
 - 1. The school is a Fairfax County Public Schools institution under the sole direction and control of the Fairfax County School Board.
 - 2. No regional governing body is created.
 - 3. Superintendents or his or her respective designees from cooperating school divisions so identified may, at their discretion, serve as an advisory group to the Superintendent of Fairfax County Public Schools.
 - 4. Fairfax County Public Schools will call and conduct meetings of the advisory group defined in section III.C.3. above.
 - 5. Each cooperating school division will reimburse the full cost to Fairfax County Public Schools for each student attending based on the per-pupil cost at the school, less transportation costs, as reflected in the Fairfax County School Board's approved budget.

6. The nonrefundable reimbursement from cooperating school divisions will be due December 1 of each year for the students from that school division who are enrolled in the school on September 30 of that year.
7. Transportation for students attending TJHSST is the responsibility of, and is at the discretion of, the cooperating school division in which the student resides.
8. A processing fee is required for application to TJHSST. See the current version of Notice 5922, Student Fees and Deposits.
9. Fairfax County Public Schools will provide the necessary forms and materials and staff orientation, as required, and will schedule and conduct requisite examinations and scoring and reporting of admissions results.

V. STUDENT SELECTION AND ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES

Each year TJHSST will admit approximately 480 ninth grade students who have committed to an intensive program focused on math, science, and technology. No twelfth grade students will be admitted; however, tenth or eleventh grade students may be admitted by a placement process. (See section IV.B.)

A. Selection of Ninth Grade Students

1. Eligibility Requirements

Applicants for admission to the school must reside with a parent and/or legal guardian who is a full-time resident of, and meets all of the residency requirements of, one of the cooperating school divisions at the time of application. Proof of residency in one of the cooperating school divisions may be required at the time of application. Applicants must be enrolled in grade 8 in any private or public school in the academic year preceding the year for which admission is sought. A student may not apply twice as an eighth grader into the ninth grade except in the case of extenuating circumstances. Enrollment in Algebra 1 or a higher level mathematics course in grade eight is a condition of eligibility. Under special circumstances, students enrolled in Math 8 in grade 8 may apply if, prior to the application deadline, the student obtains written approval from the admissions director. Any student enrolled in Math 8 in grade 8 who is allowed to apply must complete Algebra 1 prior to enrolling as a freshman at TJHSST.

2. Selection Criteria

Applicants will be selected using the following criteria:

- a. Aptitude for successful study of science, mathematics, computer science, and related technological fields.
- b. Record of prior academic achievement.
- c. Interest, motivation, intellectual curiosity, and creativity in the study of science, mathematics, computer science, and related technological fields.

- d. Background, skills, or experiences that promote the School Board's goal of providing diversity in the student body to enhance a unique learning experience and to develop future leaders.

3. Methods and Instruments of Measurement

- a. Aptitude for successful study of science, mathematics, computer science, and related technological fields will be measured by an admissions examination.
- b. Prior academic achievement will be determined by the grade point average (GPA), which is an average of final marks earned in English, social studies, mathematics, and science in grade 7 and the first quarter marks in English, social studies, mathematics, science, and foreign language, if taken for high school credit, in grade 8, for determination of the semifinalist pool. After the semifinalist pool is established, final marks in grade 7 and first and second quarter in mathematics and science in grade 8 will be considered.
- c. Interest, motivation, intellectual curiosity, and creativity in the study of science, mathematics, computer science, and related technological fields will be determined by:
 - (1) Applicant responses to two essay questions administered at the time of the examination administration.
 - (2) Applicant responses on a student information sheet.
 - (3) Recommendations of one science or mathematics teacher and of one other teacher chosen by the applicant.
- d. Background, skills, or experience that promote the School Board's goal of providing diversity in the student body to enhance a unique learning experience and to develop future leaders will be determined by:
 - (1) Applicant responses to two essay questions administered at the time of the examination administration.
 - (2) Applicant responses on a student information sheet.
 - (3) Recommendations of one science or mathematics teacher and of one other teacher chosen by the applicant.
 - (4) Applicant's original application form.

The admissions committees shall consider all these factors as part of the review process, designed to identify a talented, committed, and diverse student body consistent with the school's mission.

4. Admissions Calendar

The application deadline dates will be set each year and published in an annual notice. The application deadline for all eligible students seeking admission to the ninth grade will be no later than December 15 of the year preceding the year for which admission is sought. An exception is granted for students who become eligible by virtue of enrollment in a cooperating school division after September 30 of that year; the application deadline for those students will be no later than June 15 immediately preceding the academic year for which admission is sought. See section IV.A.6.

5. Ninth Grade Admissions Process—Winter Round

The admissions process will be conducted by the Office of Admissions of TJHSST. The admissions process will be completely independent of the TJHSST staff, except that the principal or designated school staff members will provide each year for the Office of Admissions a profile of the last class of ninth-, tenth-, and eleventh-grade successful applicants. This profile, along with other related data, will provide information and recommendations for improvement and refinement of the admissions process.

a. Admissions Process

Eligible students are assisted in making application by a local school counselor designated as that school's official contact with the Office of Admissions.

b. Testing Procedure

The admission examination is administered on a Saturday in early December, with a weekday makeup testing date during the following week for applicants with legitimate medical or religious reasons for missing the regular test date or for applicants who require special testing conditions. Test dates and test centers will be set each year and published in an annual notice.

c. Selection Procedure

- (1) To achieve the annual enrollment objective, a maximum of five percent of the student spaces will be reserved for summer applicants in the summer round of the selection process.
- (2) A sliding scale of GPA and test score will be used to determine semifinalist status. In addition, a student who falls within the sliding scale must have a math score of 30 or higher in order to qualify for the semifinalist pool. The lowest allowable GPA will be 3.0. The lowest allowable test score will be 65 percent correct. A minimum GPA of 3.0 must be coupled with a total test score of 75 percent for a student to achieve semifinalist standing. A minimum test score of 65 percent correct must be coupled with a GPA higher than 3.67 for a student to achieve semifinalist standing.

- (3) Students not included in the semifinalist pool will be notified as soon as possible after the examination and will receive their test scores at that time.
- (4) Each member of the semifinalist pool must submit a student-authored information sheet and provide two teacher recommendations.
- (5) Essay responses will be scored by pairs of readers.
- (6) Student information sheets and teacher recommendations will be rated or scored by pairs of selection reviewers.
- (7) Students' final ratings scores will be determined using a formula that considers rating scores for the student information sheet, teacher recommendations, essays, math test score, and report card marks for math and science in grades 7 and 8. Students will be admitted in numerical order beginning with the highest score. A wait list of no more than 50 students will be established.
- (8) Essay readers and selection committee members are appointed by the Superintendent or his or her designee. Each committee will include school-based and central administration personnel, such as teachers, counselors, or administrators (retired or active), from FCPS or from the cooperating school divisions.
- (9) Applicant notification of the decisions regarding admissions will be no later than April 30 each year. Decision letters will include test scores for these applicants.
- (10) An oversight committee appointed by the Superintendent or his or her designee may be used to make final admissions decisions, if needed.

6. Ninth Grade Admissions Process—Summer Round

The procedures for the summer round of admissions are identical to those for the winter round selection process, see section IV.A.5., except that:

- a. Student application materials will be reviewed by essay readers and selection reviewers, all consisting of members who participated in the winter round selection process.
- b. All summer applicants will be notified of the decisions regarding admission no later than July 15. Students on the winter round waiting list will be offered admission at that time, if additional space is available.
- c. Students applying during summer round must have already completed Algebra 1 during the eighth grade year.

B. Placement of Tenth and Eleventh Grade Students

Eligible ninth and tenth grade students may be considered for admission as tenth or eleventh grade students respectively at TJHSST if space is available. Spaces available will be determined by the Office of Admissions and the principal, taking into account attrition rates. Applications for admission to the tenth or eleventh grades will not be considered midyear.

1. Eligibility Requirements

Students who receive admission into the tenth or eleventh grade must reside with a parent and/or legal guardian who is a full-time resident of, and meets all the residency requirements of, one of the cooperating school divisions. Proof of residency in one of the cooperating school divisions may be required at the time of application. Applicants to grade 10 must be enrolled in grade 9 in any private or public school during the academic year preceding the year for which admission is requested. Applicants to the eleventh grade must be enrolled in grade 10 in any private or public school during the academic year preceding the year for which admission is requested. Eligible tenth graders applying to the eleventh grade are those who have not applied previously to TJHSST or those who have just moved to a cooperating school division.

2. Evaluation of Sophomore and Junior Applications

Sophomore and junior applicants are evaluated on the basis of:

- a. Aptitude, achievement, and interest in the study of science, mathematics, computer science, and related technological fields evidenced by:
 - (1) A student-authored information and data sheet and essays.
 - (2) Marks in mathematics, science, computer science, English, social studies, foreign language, and technology-related courses.
 - (3) Recommendations from current mathematics teacher, current science teacher, and one other adult chosen by the applicant.
 - (4) PSAT or SAT scores.
- b. Readiness for research, experimentation, or independent study in one of the school's technology laboratories, evidenced by successful science fair projects and/or other experiences, activities, or projects (in or out of school) in science, engineering, computer science, and other areas of technology.

The admissions committee shall consider the entire application, including all these factors, as part of an individualized and holistic review designed to identify a talented, committed, and diverse student body consistent with the school's mission.

3. Credits Required for Grade 10 Application

Completion of the following specified graduation credits prior to the beginning of the sophomore year is required for those requesting placement into the tenth grade:

English 9	1 credit
Foreign Language	1 credit
Mathematics (Algebra 1, Geometry)	2 credits
Biology	1 credit
Health and Physical Education	1 credit
Elective (Technology preferred)	1 credit

4. Credits Required for Grade 11 Application

Completion of the following specified graduation credits prior to the beginning of the junior year is required for those requesting placement into the eleventh grade:

English 9 and 10	2 credits
Biology	1 credit
Chemistry	1 credit
Foreign Language	1 or 2 credits (2 recommended)
Algebra 1	1 credit
Geometry	1 credit
Algebra 2-Trigonometry	1 credit
Health and Physical Education	2 credits
World History and Geography 2	1 credit
Computer Science	1 credit
Elective (Technology preferred)	1 credit

Students accepted into the eleventh grade with all the above credits would still need to take at least 13 additional credits to complete the graduation requirements for the TJHSST diploma. (See section VII., Graduation Requirements).

5. Tenth and Eleventh Grade Admission Process

The admissions process for tenth and eleventh grade students will be conducted by the Office of Admissions of Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology.

a. Application Calendar

An application deadline for eligible ninth and tenth grade students will be set each year and published in an annual notice. The application deadline for all eligible students seeking admission to the tenth or eleventh grade will be no later than June 15 immediately preceding the academic year for which admission is sought.

b. Admissions Process

Eligible students are assisted in making request for placement by the Office of Admissions or by a local school counselor designated as that school's official contact with the Office of Admissions.

c. Selection Procedure

- (1) Students' records are reviewed by the Office of Admissions and by a committee of faculty and staff members of TJHSST to determine which students have met all prerequisite courses and educational experience requirements. .
- (2) All students requesting placement will be notified of decisions by the Office of Admissions no later than July 15 of each year.

VI. RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS

A. Continuing Residency Requirement

1. A parent and/or legal guardian of an admitted student must complete a Residency Verification form in order to register the student at TJHSST.
2. A student who is admitted to TJHSST must at all times continue to reside with a parent and/or legal guardian who is a full-time resident of, and meets the residency requirements of, a cooperating school division while the student is enrolled at TJHSST. An exception will be considered, only under exceptional circumstances, for students entering grade 12 who are also 18 years of age or older. Approval for such an exception must be obtained from the director of student services, the principal, and the cluster assistant superintendent prior to the beginning of the grade 12 school year. No requests for an exception will be considered thereafter.

B. Change of Address Within Cooperating School Divisions

1. All changes of address from the time of application through graduation must be reported to the student services office and the Office of Admissions of TJHSST immediately upon change of address. If there is a change of address, a parent and/or legal guardian must complete a new Residency Verification form with the Office of Admissions.
2. If a student and his or her parent(s) or legal guardian(s) change their domicile to a location in another cooperating school division, the parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s) must verify with the Office of Admissions that the cooperating school division's percentage has not been exceeded for the student's class at TJHSST before any change of domicile.
3. A student who changes his or her domicile to a cooperating school division that has exceeded its percentage for the student's class at TJHSST may not continue to attend TJHSST.

VII. STUDENT WITHDRAWAL AND REENTRY

A. Permanent Withdrawal

A student who is enrolled in TJHSST may at any time, with parental permission, voluntarily withdraw from the school and enroll in the public high school that serves the student's residential location or in the private school of his or her choice. Once a student voluntarily withdraws from TJHSST, such students may not reenter TJHSST. A student who voluntarily withdraws from TJHSST during grade 9 is eligible to reapply for admission to grade 10 at TJHSST, but readmission is not guaranteed. A student who voluntarily withdraws after grade 9 is not eligible to reapply to TJHSST.

B. Temporary Withdrawal

A student enrolled for at least one full academic year in TJHSST may withdraw for only one full academic year and be guaranteed automatic reentry provided all of the three following conditions are met:

1. The student and parents change their domicile to a location outside the boundaries of the cooperating jurisdictions for one full academic year but return to a cooperating school division whose percentage has not been exceeded for the class that the student seeks to reenter prior to reentry.
2. The student obtains (prior to the temporary withdrawal date), from the principal, written approval of the plan for the student's academic program during the withdrawal period.
3. The student successfully completes the proposed academic program and can meet the graduation requirements of TJHSST at the expected time of graduation for the class in which the student was originally enrolled.

VIII. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

All students graduating from TJHSST must qualify for the TJHSST diploma. To graduate from TJHSST, a student must enroll in and successfully complete the required courses specified in this regulation.

A. Units of Credit for the TJHSST Diploma

Units of Credit Required for Graduation

Mathematics (1)	4 credits
Science (2)	4 credits
Technology (3)	4 credits
English	4 credits
Social Studies (4)	4 credits
Foreign Language (5)	3 credits
Health and Physical Education	2 credits

Fine Arts, Practical Arts, Humanities, or Cultural Studies (class of 2006) or Fine Arts, Practical Arts, or Cultural Studies (classes of 2007 and beyond) (6)	<u>1 credit</u>
Total	26 credits (7)

1. All students must complete a mathematics sequence that terminates with an AP Calculus course. Algebra 1, earned prior to the ninth grade year, is a requirement for admission.
2. The four-year science sequence is Biology (a component of Integrated Biology, English, and Technology), Chemistry, Physics, and Geosystems.
3. The four required technology credits are ninth grade technology (a component of Integrated Biology, English, and Technology), computer science, senior research, and one elective in science, mathematics, or technology.

Computer Science must be completed before the beginning of the junior year (classes of 2008 and beyond).

4. Students in the class of 2006 will complete the required fourth credit of social studies with World History and Geography 2. Beginning with the class of 2007, students may fulfill the required fourth credit of social studies with any two of the following semester courses: Psychology, Philosophy, Comparative Religion, Anthropology, Economics, Science, Technology and U.S. Public Policy, History of Technology, Street Law: A Course in Practical Law, America and the World Since 1989, or the yearlong World History and Geography 1. Students may take AP Psychology or AP European History as electives. These two AP courses do not fulfill the requirement for a fourth credit of social studies.
5. Three credits must be earned in the same foreign language.
6. All students are required to complete one credit in fine arts, practical arts, or cultural studies for graduation. Students in the class of 2006 may take any of the following courses to complete this requirement:
 - a. Fine Arts: Chorus, Band, Orchestra, Art, Photography, Computer Graphics, Film Study, Theater Arts, Journalism, Photojournalism, Digital Imagery.
 - b. Practical Arts: Electronics, Robotics, Prototyping, Nature of Materials, Computer-Assisted Design, Video Technology, C/C++ Language, or Computer Assembly Language, provided that these courses may not be used to fulfill both the additional science, math, or technology requirement and the practical arts required credit.
 - c. Humanities: Comparative Religion, Philosophy, Anthropology, AP Psychology, Psychology.
 - d. Cultural Arts: fourth or fifth year of a foreign language.

Students in the class of 2007 and beyond may take any of the following courses to complete this requirement:

- e. Fine Arts: Chorus, Band, Orchestra, Art, Photography, Computer Graphics, Film Study, Theater Arts, Journalism, Photojournalism, Digital Imagery.
 - f. Practical Arts: Electronics, Robotics, Prototyping, Nature of Materials, Computer-Assisted Design, Video Technology, C/C++ Language, or Computer Assembly Language, provided that these courses may not be used to fulfill both the additional science, math, or technology requirement and the practical arts required credit.
 - g. Cultural Studies: fourth or fifth year of a foreign language.
7. High school credit courses taken in seventh and eighth grades will apply toward meeting the credit requirements for graduation. Grade point average is calculated on the basis of all grades for which credit has been attempted. Parents may request that grades for any high school credit-bearing course taken in middle school be omitted from the student's transcript, and the student will not earn high school credit for the course or an SOL-verified credit, pursuant to the 1997 Virginia Accrediting Standards for Public Schools.
8. Summer credit outside of TJHSST and online courses must be preapproved by the principal, the director of student services, and division managers at TJHSST.

Students who graduate with the requirements stated above exceed the state-mandated requirements for the 24-credit advanced studies diploma. By earning a TJHSST diploma, students also qualify for the advanced studies diploma.

B. The Governor's Seal for Diplomas

Students who graduate with a grade average of B or better and successfully complete at least one AP or college-level course for credit will receive a governor's seal on the diploma.

C. Exemption From the TJHSST Diploma Requirement

An enrolled student may be granted an exemption, under exceptional circumstances, by the director of student services and the principal, from meeting the requirements for graduation from TJHSST if the student meets local and state requirements for graduation. A student who is granted an exemption from the TJHSST diploma may receive a generic diploma from Fairfax County Public Schools and may participate in the TJHSST graduation ceremony.

D. Credit by Objective

Officials of TJHSST may grant credit by objective for physical education only, based on completion of performance objectives, provided that:

1. The scope of each course for which credit is awarded under this provision is comparable to the scope of the corresponding course meeting the school's standard for number of hours of instruction.
2. A set of performance objectives for the course is developed, which will clearly indicate, upon successful completion, that the student has met the aims and objectives of the course, as evidenced through the mastery of certain predetermined skills, knowledge, and values associated with the course.
3. Procedures for evaluating student progress and achievement are developed. (Such procedures could include criterion-referenced tests or standardized tests).
4. Approval is obtained from the assistant superintendent, Instructional Services Department.

E. Graduation Credit by Alternate Methods

Alternate methods of earning credit for graduation from TJHSST require approvals, before beginning any study or program, of the director of student services and the principal. Alternate methods must be ones sanctioned by the Virginia Board of Education and Fairfax County School Board policies and regulations and must be ones that ensure comparability to the corresponding course(s) offered by TJHSST.

IX. ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES

A. Academic Standards

An enrolled student shall maintain a cumulative B-average at the end of each school year in order to remain a student in good standing at TJHSST.

B. Academic Standards Procedure

1. For any student who is experiencing academic difficulty during the school year, TJHSST teachers and staff members will develop and document intervention strategies to help the student be academically successful at TJHSST.
2. At the end of the school year, if the student fails to maintain a cumulative B average (unweighted 3.0 grade point average), the student will be evaluated by the director of student services, the principal, and the cluster assistant superintendent for possible return to the student's home, or base, high school. Extenuating or exceptional circumstances may be considered in making this determination.

X. CURRICULUM

The curriculum for TJHSST includes selected courses prescribed in the Fairfax County Public Schools Program of Studies, as well as courses designed to explore new structures and methods in the sciences, technology, mathematics, humanities, and the arts. The curriculum for TJHSST must meet state governor's high school and Fairfax County Public Schools academic requirements.

XI. PROGRAM

The eight-period day consists of seven academic classes and one required activity period. Students do not attend each course every day. Flexible scheduling allows all classes to meet for two double periods and one single period each week.

XII. EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The extracurricular activities program for TJHSST is the same comprehensive extracurricular activities program, including athletics, as that approved for other high schools in Fairfax County Public Schools. Any approved activity will be provided if sufficient student interest and participation exist.

Any student who transfers from TJHSST with no legal change in domicile will be ineligible, according to the Virginia High School League transfer rules, to participate for one semester in Virginia High School League-sanctioned activities of any Virginia high school.

XIII. PERSONNEL AND STAFFING

Staffing and personnel policies for TJHSST that differ from staffing and personnel policies for other Fairfax County public schools include the following:

- A. All instructional staff members will be employed for at least eight hours each working day.
- B. All instructional staff members will receive a salary scale adjustment of +7 percent.
- C. Division managers at TJHSST participate in the supervision and evaluation of teachers and staff members.
- D. Criteria by which instructional staff members are selected will be determined by the Department of Human Resources with assistance from the administrative staff of TJHSST.

See also the current version of: Notice 5922, Student Fees and Deposits