Eligibility

The TAG program targets students who learn at a faster pace and are academically strong. These students are generally in the top 10-15% of their peer group. In the spring of third grade, families interested in pursuing a TAG placement for their child, will sign up to take the CogAT standardized test. CogAT along with NWEA scores above the 85th percentile are good indicators of success. Please note that CogAT measures aptitude for learning and NWEA measures content proficiency. Students who score on the lower end of this range are not by definition gifted students, but may benefit from the accelerated pace and higher level content offered within the TCAPS TAG program. Note: TAG is a two-year program. After 2017-2018, fifth graders will not be able to enroll in TAG unless they are coming from another Talented and Gifted Program in another district.

Curriculum

TCAPS TAG accelerates language arts by one year. We currently use the Journeys curriculum (Fourth will use the fifth grade level and 5th will use the 6th grade level).

TAG students complete three years of math over two years (4th through 6th grades). The curriculum is Math Expressions. Fourth graders complete all of fourth and half of the fifth grade content. Fifth graders complete the second half of the fifth grade curriculum and all of the sixth grade content.

Please note that mathematics tends to be more of a challenge in terms of adjustment to pace and content than the other core subject areas. Since we cover three years of math content within a two year period, we move fast. The most beneficial thing you can do for your child over the summer is have them solid and fluent with multiplication and division facts when they arrive in the fall.

TAG science units are all aligned with the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). We use all six fourth and fifth grade NGSS Foss Units. In TAG, we have a full science class each day and also incorporate STEM objectives (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics).

The social studies topics are the same in TAG as general education classes; however, more extensions are used.

TAG students do all the same specials classes (music, gym, and art) as any other TCAPS elementary student.

Homework

There tends to be more homework in fourth and fifth grade no matter what school or program you are in. There is no more or less homework in TAG, but all work given is at a higher level. The purpose of homework is to teach students to be responsible as well as reinforcing school curriculum. We realize students may have extracurricular commitments to balance with the demands of school. Math homework will typically be sent home weekly; however, other work may be assigned as necessary. The TAG homework policy will be sent home during the first week of school. Throughout the year, there will be special projects to complete at home. Students will be given ample time and guidance to complete these projects.

Other Information

A positive classroom community is essential in any learning environment. We do many team-building activities at the beginning of the year so that students get to know each other and adjust well to their new school. When coming to TAG, students have the opportunity to participate in LEAP sports, Scouts, Girls On The Run, and other activities at Central Grade or their home school. This allows students to maintain relationships with peers at their home schools. TAG students are integrated with all other 4th and 5th grade classes, at Central Grade, for both lunch and recess. We encourage friendships beyond the TAG classrooms.

Open Enrollment

When families decide to send their child to the TAG program, many chose to open enroll siblings at Central Grade. Contact the Central Grade office for more information. (Placement is not guaranteed and depends on class sizes at Central Grade.)

Things to Consider

If your child falls on the lower end of the acceptance scale, or nearly missed our qualifying criteria and is still interested in joining TAG, there are some points to consider:

It may be tough to decide if it is best for your child to be at the lower end of a TAG classroom or the higher end of a general education classroom. Within the TAG community there is the possibility of greater frustration and higher level of struggle, but they may get pulled up by higher achieving peers. In the general education setting, your child could gain confidence by demonstrating greater proficiency than his or her peers and taking on more of a leadership role. Each child is unique and would be better served in different ways. We encourage you to consider both the academic and emotional components of joining the TAG community.

Middle School AT Classes

Students that are accepted into the TAG program generally move on to the AT (Academically Talented) classes in the middle schools.

The TAG program accelerates in all subject areas. In Middle school however, students have an opportunity to self-select specific AT classes. Students can choose one or more core content areas to accelerate.

Students receiving three years of Math in the TAG program benefit greatly when joining AT classes at middle school as opposed to students who have not gone through the TAG program. Sixth grade AT students are really doing seventh grade math. The TAG students are on track to move right into seventh grade math content, whereas students coming from a general education fifth grade class will not have had any of the sixth grade concepts. This makes it a very large jump academically, and something to consider when deciding on attending TAG now, or waiting for middle school AT math.

Class Configurations

Class lists are created over the summer when we have a confirmed student roster. One consideration is trying to put students with one or two kids from his/her home school. If there is a child that you feel would be a particularly good learning partner, or a situation where different classrooms would be beneficial for both students, please feel free to let us know and we will take that into consideration when making class lists. All requests need to be given to Central Grade Office by the end of May.

Arrival and Dismissal

The D Door, near the corner of 8th Street and Pine, will be where all TAG students enter and exit the building. Doors will open at 7:45. Students may enter at this time and proceed to their classroom where their teachers will be supervising. Class begins at 8:00 a.m. Our school day ends at 2:58 p.m.Half-day dismissal is at 11:22.

Communication

Our TAG website is another form of communication. Check it often for important announcements, homework, a class calendar, and appreciations: centralgradetag.weebly.com.

Feel free to call us, but email is a more efficient tool. Due to our daily schedules, we are likely to respond to emails in a timelier manner.

Contact Information

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