

Williamstown Middle School
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Teacher of the Gifted and Talented and High Achieving Students
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May 4, 2016

Dear Parents,

Can you believe your child will be attending Williamstown Middle School this upcoming fall? I am sure that there is excitement and possibly even some apprehension on you and your child's part as you prepare for this new educational experience.

I wanted to take this opportunity to explain how the Talented and Gifted program at Williamstown Middle School differs from the elementary school program. There are three important differences. First, our identification for eligibility to the program begins with the student applying for admission into the program. Second, the curriculum focuses on developing skills through the Pre-Advanced Placement class as suggested by the College Board, and our program focuses on social studies and science rather than mathematics and language arts literature. Finally, our class is not a pullout program where students will be required to complete work upon their return to class. I will be their replacement social studies and science teacher so they will not have to make up work due to participation in the TAG program. They will, however, complete a rigorous program at a demanding pace. Interested students, who pre-qualify, should apply no later than **May 31, 2016**. Below I have listed a few frequently asked questions, which I hope will answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Kimberly Surran Morris

If my child is already in TAG does he/she still need to apply? Yes! In the past we have had many TAG parents who wait until the last minute for their student to apply. Please be aware that due to the large numbers in our student population it is extremely difficult to make schedule changes in September.

How does my child apply? Interested students should email Mrs. Morris at the above address and request an application, or students may download a copy of the application at the website listed above by clicking on the link in the upper-right hand corner **which is labeled TAG application 2016-2017**. If you do not have access to the Internet, please feel free to call me at 856-629-7444 extension 3481 and I will send you an application via United States mail.

How many "spots" are there? There is no set number. We want our program to reflect the best of the best from the four elementary schools.

Where do I send my child's completed application? Please send your child's completed application to the address listed above, or you may email it to me as an attachment at the email address listed above. If you email your application, please be sure to obtain a confirmation from me that I received it.

What are the qualifications to be eligible for TAG? A student who is desirous in seeking admission to the TAG program should meet the following criteria guidelines:

- The student should be meeting or exceeding the standards on this year's report card especially in the core subject areas which are social studies, mathematics, science and language arts.
- High scores on the MAP ELA/Math assessments.
- A high score on the SAGES II Reasoning test which will be administered to the students at the elementary schools during the first week of June.
- Teacher recommendation (**The teachers will send their recommendations to me. Please do not ask them**).
- The student should be organized and express the desire to be challenged more, through an increased workload, on a continual basis.

How will the program work with my student's schedule? When the students switch to go to social studies and science, those students who are enrolled in the Social Studies/Science TAG program will report outside of their home core to my room. Our class will take place the same time as the regular social studies/science program. When social studies/science is over, they will return to attend their next class with their peers. I will be the one who will assign your child his/her grade.

My student is uncertain about participating in middle school, should he/she still apply? The decision is up to you. However, if your child enjoys a challenge, he/she should consider applying. It is better to apply and later rescind than not to apply at all.

What is the SAGES II? How will it be administered? The SAGES II is an assessment instrument which is used to gauge your child's intellectual ability. This June, I will be visiting each elementary school. Those students who applied by the **May 31st, 2016**, deadline will be pulled from class to take the SAGES II test. The test will take approximately one hour. Students will be taking the test online. Only students who are **not** currently in TAG will be taking this test. Testing dates are as follows:

- Holly Glen: **June 1st, 2016 at 2: 30 p.m.**
- Radix Elementary: **June 3rd, 2016 at 2: 30 p.m.**
- Whitehall: **June 6th, 2016 at 2: 30 p.m.**
- Oak Knoll: **June 7th, 2016 at 2: 30 p.m.**

How will I be notified if my child does or does not qualify? After I have all the necessary data, I will send you a decision via United States mail as to whether or not your child has been accepted to the program.

Can anyone just get in? No. Only those students who qualify through the criteria listed above will be admitted to the program. Students must sign the honors maintenance contract, which requires the student to maintain at least a B average in all their core subjects. Students will receive the Honors Maintenance Contract upon acceptance to the program.

Who should I ask if I have questions? I am the best person to address if you have any questions or concerns. If you have a question I cannot answer, I will direct you to the appropriate source.

Talented and Gifted Application

This application may be photocopied.

Please fill out in pen or use a word processing program.

You may e-mail Mrs. Morris and request this document as an attachment if you like at kmorris@monroetwp.k12.nj.us.

Name: (Include First, Middle and Last)	
Address:	
Parents' / Guardians' Names:	
Home Phone Number:	
Parent Cell / Work Number:	
Parent Email Address:	

School you currently attend	
Are you currently participating in the TAG program?	
If not, have you participated in TAG in the past?	
If so, when?	

Application Deadline is: May 31st, 2016.

Please list any and all extra-curricular activities in which you actively participate. These activities may include but are not limited to: school, sports, community and religious groups. (You may list these on a separate sheet of paper if need be.) Indicate any leadership positions you have held.

Please attach a copy of the following. If you are emailing these documents please send application, report card, and an optional letter of recommendation as three separate attachments.

	Copy of Second Trimester Report Card
	Optional: Letter of Recommendation from an advisor of an extra-curricular activity in which you participate. This can be a youth group leader, scout leader, coach or moderator of an activity through school. Do not ask a current teacher.

Please note: We will be using multiple measures including the MAP Scores and other assessments once all applications have been received.

Questions? Feel free to email me at kmorris@monroetwp.k12.nj.us. Or call me at 856-629-7444 extension 3481.

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