



We have answers.

Full time? Part time? Gifted magnet – or zoned school?

Pinellas County Schools offer gifted services at every middle school. The following pages contain an overview of those services so you can choose the program that best suits your student. The choice period is Jan. 6-15, 2021.

You can learn more about all middle school program options through fairs and Discovery Nights hosted by our District Application Programs office. All events are virtual.

Nov. 5: Middle school application programs fair

Nov. 7: Application programs fair all grade levels

Nov. 18: Discovery night covering all
Centers for Gifted Studies

For event times and more information, go to
<https://www.pcsb.org/dap>

Keep
scrolling
to view the
detailed
letter.



October 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Soon you will be asked to make decisions about middle school options for your child. We are fortunate in Pinellas County to have a continuum of gifted services ranging from full-time services at three Centers for Gifted Studies to part-time services available in all middle schools in the form of a gifted elective. The purpose of this letter is to help you make an informed decision based on your child's educational needs. I encourage you to consider your child's areas of strength and interest as you review the available options.

FULL-TIME GIFTED SERVICES

In the full-time service option, gifted students are in self-contained classes for all core subjects: language arts, math, science, social studies, and a specially designed gifted magnet elective. Instruction is provided by gifted endorsed teachers and all students in these classes have met gifted eligibility. The program is challenging and is designed to promote creative, critical and complex thinking and to meet the unique academic and social/emotional needs of adolescent gifted students. The 2021-22 middle school Centers for Gifted Studies curriculum map and ***Frequently Asked Questions*** are provided at the end of this letter. Feel free to reach out to individual schools for details about their programs.

The middle school Centers for Gifted Studies are set up in a school within a school magnet model, and the option is now available at four school sites:

In north county: Dunedin Highland

In mid county: Morgan Fitzgerald

In south county: Thurgood Marshall Fundamental (Gifted/Fundamental) **or** John Hopkins (Gifted/Arts) **(NEW)**

All students interested in attending one of the Centers for Gifted Studies must apply during the magnet application period **January 6 - 15, 2021**. Students enrolled in elementary full-time programs are **not** automatically enrolled and must apply to the middle school in their geographic area.

Due to the pandemic, District Application Program fairs, Discovery Nights and tours are happening virtually. I encourage you to check out any district application programs that may interest your child.

District Application Fairs for Middle School:

6:30-7:45 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 5 (*middle school programs only*)

9:00-10:15 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 7 (*all district application programs*)

CGS Discovery Night for all four sites:

6:00pm Wednesday, Nov. 18 (*all four CGS sites*)

For more information, please visit www.pcsb.org/DAP or contact the Center for Gifted Studies in your geographic area (contact information is contained later in this packet).

PART-TIME GIFTED SERVICES

In our part-time option, gifted students spend a portion of their day with other gifted students. Unlike most elementary pullout program models, gifted services are part of a student's regular daily schedule. **All** Pinellas County middle schools offer part-time gifted services in the form of a gifted elective course called "Advanced Academics 6-8."

Advanced Academics 6-8 (gifted elective course)

All students in **Advanced Academics 6-8** have met gifted eligibility, and instruction is provided by a gifted endorsed teacher. This course is similar to the elementary pullout program in that it exposes students to topics not usually included in general education curriculum. It also incorporates critical and creative thinking and social-emotional curriculum. The Advanced Academics course topics rotate over the three years of middle school and include Humanities-Literature; Social Sciences-Philosophy and Psychology; and Social Sciences-Investigating Cultures. All three years offer students a taste of topics they will have access to in high school through Advanced Placement (AP) courses.

ACCELERATED/ADVANCED COURSES

All middle schools offer advanced courses and accelerated options in math and/or science for academically talented students. Information about these options can be found on each school's course request forms. While these courses are not a gifted service, they do provide academic challenge to all students.

5TH GRADE EXIT EP MEETINGS

Before your child completes fifth grade, the elementary gifted teacher will invite you to a meeting to discuss and update your child's Educational Plan (EP). The EP will be written to reflect the gifted services your child will receive in middle school.

Please feel free to contact the Gifted Education Office at (727) 588-6046 if you have questions or concerns.

Respectfully,

Coral Marsh

Coral Marsh
Gifted Education Specialist
K-12 Pinellas County Schools

2021-2022 Middle School Centers for Gifted Studies Curriculum Map for Incoming 6th Graders

Dunedin Highland Middle/ Morgan Fitzgerald Middle/ Thurgood Marshall Fundamental Middle/John Hopkins Middle

The goal of the middle school Centers for Gifted Studies is to provide a full-time gifted program experience for students. In this setting, students learn in self-contained gifted classes with their intellectual peers and with instructors who are specially trained in best practices in gifted education. The curriculum philosophy of the middle school Centers for Gifted Studies is grounded in the belief that gifted students require comprehensive and on-going differentiated curriculum and instruction in order to develop their abilities appropriately. The curriculum uses an interdisciplinary approach and is integrated across the broad concepts of change, systems and models. This unique curriculum design promotes in-depth learning and creative, critical and complex thinking.

	6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade
Language Arts (required)	Language Arts 2, Advanced	Language Arts 3, Advanced	English 1 Honors (HS credit)
Math (required)	Accelerated Math Grade 6 OR Accelerated Math Grade 7 (if 6 th grade accelerated math was passed virtually or if student earned proficiency score on competency test)	Accelerated Math Grade 7 OR Algebra 1 Honors (HS credit)	Algebra 1 Honors (HS credit) OR Geometry Honors (HS credit)
Science (required)	Comprehensive Science 1, Accelerated Honors	Comprehensive Science 2, Accelerated Honors	Physical Science Honors (HS credit)
Social Studies (required)	US History Advanced & Career Planning	Civics Advanced & Career Planning	Pre-AP World History & Geography (HS credit)
Advanced Academics 6-8 & Career Planning For Gifted Students (required)	Advanced Academics Elective: Geography and Individuality	Advanced Academics Elective: Government & Power	Advanced Academics Elective: Economics & Perception
World Language <u>(Strongly recommended but not required)</u>	n/a	World Language 1 (HS credit)	World Language 2 (HS credit)
Electives	Options vary by school site	Options vary by school site	Options vary by school site
P.E. /Health	as required	as required	as required

Curriculum highlights include:

- Advanced and enriched content based on the Integrated Curriculum Model (ICM) (VanTassel-Baska)
- Accelerated course paths earning up to seven high school credits
- Curriculum units designed for gifted learners from the College of William and Mary and Vanderbilt University
- Strong vocabulary program
- Interdisciplinary connections
- Academic competitions – *National History Day, Future City Competition, Future Problem Solving, Odyssey of the Mind, etc.*
- Gifted elective focuses on research skills, creative and critical thinking, independent study and social-emotional needs of the gifted learner where each year has a pre-AP topic as its theme
- Option to select non-magnet elective courses such as band, art, technology

For further information, please feel free to contact:

District Gifted Office	(727) 588-6046
Dunedin Highlands Center for Gifted Studies	(727) 469-4112
Morgan Fitzgerald Center for Gifted Studies	(727) 547-4526
John Hopkins Center for Arts & Gifted Studies	(727) 893-2400 x 2036
Thurgood Marshall Fundamental & Center for Gifted Studies	(727) 552-1737

Frequently Asked Questions about the Middle School Centers for Gifted Studies Updated 2020

My child has never been in a full-time gifted program experience; how can I know if he/she will be successful?

Students who meet the criteria for gifted have the academic potential for success in a full-time gifted program. However, not all gifted students demonstrate the need for a full-time gifted curriculum that includes acceleration and advanced content in all subject areas. The curriculum at the middle school Centers for Gifted Studies is designed to provide a challenge and to promote academic growth. Important factors to consider are your child's willingness to meet an academic challenge and to persevere if the work is complex or difficult. Time management, self-direction and organizational skills are also important. Your child's elementary general education and gifted teachers can provide some guidance in making the decision to apply based on your child's performance. The teachers at the middle school Centers for Gifted Studies will work with students and parents to provide support as needed through the Educational Plan (EP) process.

Will elementary Center for Gifted Studies students be given priority acceptance for the middle school Centers for Gifted Studies?

Yes, elementary Center for Gifted Studies students have a feeder assurance to the middle school gifted center in their geographic application area. However, parents **must** follow the district process for application and acceptance.

- The CGS at Elisa Nelson Elementary has feeder assurance to the CGS at Dunedin Highland Middle School.
- The CGS at Ridgecrest Elementary has feeder assurance to the CGS at Morgan Fitzgerald Middle School.
- The CGS at Midtown Academy has feeder assurance to the CGS at John Hopkins Middle School (arts) or the CGS at Thurgood Marshall Middle School (fundamental).

If my child is zoned for Dunedin, Fitzgerald or Hopkins, do I still need to apply for the Center for Gifted Studies?

Yes, parents must apply through the district application process for a seat in the Center for Gifted Studies.

To which Center for Gifted Studies site can my child apply?

Eligibility for middle school CGS programs is based on your zoned middle school.

Dunedin Highland: Students zoned for Dunedin Highland, Carwise, Palm Harbor, Safety Harbor & Tarpon Springs middle schools

Morgan Fitzgerald: Largo, Morgan Fitzgerald, Oak Grove, Osceola, Pinellas Park & Seminole middle schools

Johns Hopkins or Thurgood Marshall Fundamental: Azalea, Bay Point, John Hopkins, Meadowlawn & Tyrone middle schools

Do I have to submit a copy of my child's Educational Plan (EP) with my application if my child is currently enrolled in gifted classes in a Pinellas County School?

No, gifted eligibility of Pinellas students can be verified through the district information system.

Will transportation be provided to the middle school Centers for Gifted Studies?

Yes, arterial bus transportation is provided to students who live more than two miles from the school.

Will the students accepted at Thurgood Marshall Fundamental Middle School Center for Gifted Studies be required to follow the policies of a fundamental school?

Yes, the Center for Gifted Studies is a school within a school magnet. Since Thurgood Marshall is a fundamental school, all students must adhere to the fundamental policies. Students will also have a priority to a fundamental high school.

Will the students accepted at John Hopkins Middle School Center for Gifted Studies be a part of the school's Center for the Arts?

Yes, the Center for Gifted Studies is a school within a school magnet. Since John Hopkins is also an arts magnet, students enrolled in this CGS will also be part of the Center for the Arts magnet and have access to the specialized electives.

Will the curriculum be a challenging, rigorous curriculum?

Yes, the curriculum for each class has been designed to provide accelerated course options, advanced content and enrichment based on best practices in gifted education.

Will courses in the Center for Gifted Studies count toward high school credit?

Yes, high school credit can be earned for successful completion of requirements for English 1 Honors, Algebra I Honors, Geometry Honors, Physical Science Honors, Pre-AP World History and Geography, and World Language I and 2.

Will the students take all coursework within the Center for Gifted Studies?

Students must take all of the courses required in the magnet curriculum (core content plus gifted elective). Each year students will enroll in elective courses at the school such as art, band, orchestra or technology. Elective course offerings are set by the school.

Will the students participate in competitions?

Yes, students may participate in the following national academic competitions: *National History Day*, *Future City Competition* and *Future Problem Solving*. Additional opportunities may also be available such as *Science Olympiad*, *Odyssey of the Mind*, and *Math Counts*.