



**TAPA**

*Artists. Scholars. Stars.*

# **The TAPA Handbook**

Approved by the TAPA Board - September 11, 2018; Updated by the TAPA Board September 12, 2021

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# The Purpose of this Handbook

The purpose of this handbook is to outline the philosophy, policies, and procedures of Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts. It gives students, teachers, and families an overview of day-to-day life in our community and is a reference in regard to what can be expected from TAPA. It helps students and families understand how we implement our philosophy in the various areas of our school. Additionally, it provides information regarding TAPA's artistic and academic course offerings.

For TAPA to be successful, we need to work together with families as well as with students. For this reason, we encourage families to review this material together and call us with any questions. On rare occasions, it is necessary during the course of the school year to change policies, procedures, or rules stated in this handbook. If the modifications are significant, families will be notified.

## TAPA's Mission, Vision, and Values

TAPA: Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts is an academically rigorous, arts-integrated public charter school for students in grades 7-12. TAPA is woven into the diverse and creative fabric of the city of Providence, fostering engaged, well-rounded artistic leaders.

### TAPA's Mission Statement

Through a rigorous arts-integrated program, TAPA, a public charter school in Providence, Rhode Island, cultivates artist-scholars who are prepared for collegiate and professional success and leadership in a global society.

### TAPA's Vision Statement

Through the **Ensemble** effort of the students, staff, and community, TAPA students will embrace and utilize their artistic talents, pursue post-secondary success in academic and artistic fields, and become active members of a global society.

### TAPA's Definition of Ensemble

1. All the parts of a thing, taken together so that each part is considered only in relation to the whole.
2. A group of supporting entertainers, as actors, dancers, and singers, in a theatrical production.
3. The students, teachers, and staff at TAPA.

### TAPA's Values

- **Pedagogy:** TAPA integrates arts and academics to create a unique educational experience. The school strikes a careful balance between guided practice and extensive independent practice. Work in the arts yields stronger academic performance, and vice versa.
- **Press:** Students are pressed to push their limits and take risks. TAPA believes that only in this climate can one see maximum growth.
- **Persistence:** Strong academics alone may not yield college success. TAPA emphasizes the importance of persistence, grit, and time management.
- **Parental Involvement:** Families receive frequent communication from the school, and have quick and easy access to student information. Active and engaged families create an environment where families and community are part of positive change at the school.

### **The TAPA Pledge**

As a student at TAPA, I welcome this day,  
Knowing it is mine to use or waste  
I will celebrate this day to its fullest,  
It will never be mine again.  
Today I will be honest and fair  
And responsible for what I say and do,  
I will try my best,  
I will follow my dreams,  
I will make a difference.  
I am an artist.  
I am a scholar.  
I am a star.

## **TAPA's History**

At its core, TAPA is a product of the South Side of Providence, RI. In 2007, TAPA's founders pulled together a series of community charrettes, asking the people of the South Side what the neighborhood most needed. The group who met that day took it as their mission to break the cycle of "families from economically distressed districts" who "just take what they can get or are given by the [school] system" rather than "feel empowered to demand the best educational preparation for their student or to influence the depth, breadth, and variety of academic offerings within their student's schools or classrooms" (Stevos, 2008).

The idea for TAPA was wildly ambitious: opening a new school in a community that had seen its neighborhood school shuttered, with a focus on the Arts. The plan was challenged in some RI education circles: Without a heavy-lifting power-player or substantial outside backing, how could this pie-in-the-sky community project get off the ground? However, with hard work and determination, the TAPA Ensemble persevered, and Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts opened in the fall of 2010 with our first class of 34 seventh-grade students. Now at capacity, TAPA serves 204 students in grades seven through twelve.

## **TAPA's Commitment to Our Students and Families**

### **The TAPA Staff Pledges To**

1. Acknowledge and demonstrate respect for our diverse Ensemble of different races, religions, genders/gender identities, cultures, sexual orientations, classes, abilities, and points of view.
2. Demonstrate respect by considering others' feelings and needs when making choices that impact the Ensemble.
3. Demonstrate respect for the TAPA Ensemble by putting forth the maximum effort in all curricular and extracurricular events and activities.
4. Remember that the welfare of the students is our primary concern. The heart of our job is caring for the students.
5. Demonstrate an assumption of best intentions.

### **In the TAPA Classroom, All Educators and Artists Pledge To**

1. Demonstrate extensive knowledge of content and a wide range of pedagogical approaches.
2. Strive to reach an extensive understanding of individual students’ developmental or learning characteristics, skills, abilities, special, medical, or learning needs, and/or cultural heritage.
3. Set consistent high expectations for student success and learning.
4. Implement instruction that is rigorous and provides differentiated pathways to learning and demonstration of knowledge
5. Maintain a system to monitor and record students’ completion of assignments, progress and learning which is accessible to students and families.
6. Set strategic, measurable, achievable, realistic, timely (SMART) goals for students, implement strategies to aid students in achieving their goals and monitor their progress.
7. Utilize data provided and collected on students to effectively implement increased rigor and a variety of teaching strategies to increase learning for all students and close achievement gaps.

The greatest measure of TAPA’s success is the school’s lifelong impact on our students. We strive for positive student outcomes not only in higher education, employment, and economic stability, but also in the areas of civic leadership, social conscience, and emotional intelligence. TAPA will have succeeded if, by continuing to shape creative and compassionate artist-scholars, we affect positive change in the city we serve and the community at large.

### **Inclusive Community**

We strive to be an inclusive community that reflects the diversity of our city, student body, and local arts community. Just as our approach to academic learning is based on an arts-integrated curriculum, our approach to responsible citizenship is accomplished by setting a “warm/demanding” tone throughout everything we do with our students. We teach students to accept and value differences among their peers by discussing those differences respectfully. The aim is to create understanding and build a strong sustainable, accepting community.

Our community is enriched by the cultural, religious, racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity of our families, students, and staff. We welcome the differences in sexual orientation and gender identity brought to our school by our staff and families. Our families’ varied compositions—traditional or single parent or same-sex parent, nuclear or extended, adoptive or blended—reflect the larger community in which we live and illustrate for our students the many different ways we build our families. We celebrate our differences and we are committed to creating a safe, caring environment where everyone can be him/them/herself without fear of harassment, ridicule, or rejection.

In choosing to send your student to TAPA, you have chosen for them not only a rigorous academic program taught by dedicated teachers in small classrooms, you have also chosen to broaden your student’s worldview through their friendships and conversations with others.

### **Transgender and Gender-Nonconforming Students**

Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts has a strong history of creating and nurturing a safe and supportive learning environment. There is no room for discrimination at TAPA. We protect all students, including transgender and gender-nonconforming students, from any type of bias. TAPA’s extensive anti-bullying and anti-harassment policies, as well as more detailed information on how we support transgender and gender-nonconforming students, can be found at the end of this handbook. In specific regards to transgender and gender-nonconforming students, TAPA will:

- Foster an educational environment that is safe and free from discrimination for all students, regardless of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression;
- Reduce the stigmatization of and improve the educational integration of transgender and nonconforming students, maintaining the privacy of all students, and fostering cultural competence and professional development for school staff.
- Provide all students with access to restrooms and changing facilities that correspond to their gender identity, including providing an all-gender bathroom option.
- Ensure that all students have the right to dress in accordance with their gender identity.
- Use the name and pronoun that corresponds to each student’s gender identity.
  - Per the Rhode Island Department of Education, TAPA must maintain permanent student records that include a student’s legal name and legal gender. However, to the extent that TAPA is not legally required to use a student’s legal name and gender on other school records or documents, we shall use the name and gender preferred by the student. School IDs, for example, are not legal documents and shall use the student’s preferred name. TAPA will change a student’s official record to respect a change in legal name or gender upon receipt of documentation that such change has been made pursuant to a court order or through amendment of state or federally issued identification.

## **Celebration and Observation of Religious Holidays**

TAPA recognizes the responsibility of parents/guardians to address the religious needs of their children. In order to reinforce the family's values and to avoid isolation and discrimination against students, TAPA shall accommodate, to the extent practicable, established religious calendar holidays by ensuring that examinations and special activities are scheduled so as not to interfere with those established religious holidays.

Further, any student who is unable to attend class, take an examination, and/or participate in a school-required event due to a religious holiday or a religious belief shall be excused from class, examination, or school-required event. The student shall be provided with an opportunity to make up any such examination or school-required event. The student shall not be deemed absent from school if he/she does not attend school due to a religious holiday.

TAPA shall not punish or deliver any adverse actions towards a student who is absent from school due to a religious holiday and/or is excused from an examination or school-required event due to a religious holiday and/or belief.

Notwithstanding the above and in compliance with federal and state law, TAPA shall not observe any religious holidays or promote any religious beliefs on the school campus and/or at any school-sponsored or related event or activity, whether on or off-campus.

## **Services Provided for TAPA Families**

### **On-Site Pantry**

Non-perishable food items and canned goods are available for TAPA families. Boxes are prepared and distributed once a week. Packaged items can be picked up by families or sent home with students. Families wanting to take advantage of this program should contact Ms. Vidal at 401-644-7657, [ms.vidal@tapaprovidence.org](mailto:ms.vidal@tapaprovidence.org).



### **Computer and Internet Access**

Desktop computers and access to the internet are available for parent use Monday-Friday. Parents can access the internet to job hunt, email, research, study, accessing online courses, communicating with teachers, etc. Printing of important documents is also available. Contact Ms. Vidal to schedule technology access, 644-7657, [ms.vidal@tapaprovidence.org](mailto:ms.vidal@tapaprovidence.org).

### **For Students Families Experiencing Homelessness**

Information, access to community resources, and referrals are available for displaced families staying in shelters or doubling up with family members or friends. Academic support is available to TAPA students of families experiencing homelessness. Please contact Ms. Vidal (TAPA's Title One Homeless Liaison) for more information, 401-644-7657, [ms.vidal@tapaprovidence.org](mailto:ms.vidal@tapaprovidence.org).

## **TAPA Admissions Policy**

1. Applications for enrollment for grades 7-12 will be available in November of each year for the upcoming school year. Interested families may visit the school, school website or attend an open house event to obtain and complete an application for enrollment. Applications for enrollment are due the last week of February of each year for the upcoming school year. Student selection for enrollment will be made through a random lottery.
2. TAPA is a Providence-based charter school. Only applications for students residing in the city of Providence will be considered valid and entered into the admissions lottery. Applications listing an address outside of the city of Providence are considered invalid and cannot be entered into the lottery.
3. TAPA serves students in grades 7-12. Only applications for students entering 7-12 grade will be considered valid and entered into the admissions lottery. Applications requesting admission for grades other than those served by the school are considered invalid and cannot be entered into the lottery.
4. When fewer students apply than there are seats available, all eligible applicants shall be offered enrollment into the school.
5. When more students apply than there are seats available, the school shall conduct a random lottery to determine enrollment.
6. The lottery will be held on March 1st of the school year immediately before the year in which students are to enroll. If the 1st of March falls on a weekend, the lottery shall be held on the first weekday of the month of March.
  1. All students in the lottery pool at the time of the lottery shall be eligible for the lottery drawing
  2. Once all available seats have been filled by lottery, the remaining applicants in the pool shall be drawn and placed on a waiting list ranked in the order that they were drawn.
7. Exemptions from the lottery
  1. Siblings of students enrolled in the school at the time of the lottery
    1. For purposes of this policy “sibling” means “one of two or more individuals having one common parent.” If two children share a common guardian, and the guardian was appointed for a substantial reason other than school enrollment, then we would also interpret “siblings” to include children who share a common legal guardian. We do not interpret “siblings” to include members of a student’s extended family: such as cousins, step-siblings, and others who, because of

various circumstances, have become part of the family unit and live in the same household.

2. To establish sibling status, families of students must provide:
  1. Photo identification for parent or guardian AND one of the following:
  2. Student birth certificate identifying the same parent; or Court document(s) reflecting appointment of a common legal guardian
2. Children of teachers
  1. For the purposes of this policy “teacher” means “every person for whose position a certificate issued by the department of elementary and secondary education is required by law.” See R.I.G.L. §16-13-1.
3. Founders of the School
  1. For the purposes of this policy “founder” means a person serving on the original, founding Board or any teacher or administrator that participated in the founding of the school
8. Children of teachers and children of founders shall comprise no more than 10% of the school’s total enrollment.
9. Should there be more siblings, children of teachers, and children of founders applying for a grade than there are openings, a lottery of siblings, children of teachers, and children of founders will be conducted before any other applicants will be admitted provided, however, that children of teachers and children of founders shall comprise no more than 10% of the school’s total enrollment. Students from this group not selected by this lottery will be placed on a waiting list before other applicants.
10. Notification –
  1. Families will be notified in writing whether or not the student was selected from the lottery for enrollment into the school.
  2. Upon notification, the family shall confirm its intent to accept the enrollment by submitting a standard confirmation form to the school.
  3. Families have fifteen (15) days from the mailing of notification to confirm their child’s enrollment. The school will make a reasonable effort within this period to contact the family. If the family fails to confirm enrollment by the established deadline, the school will offer enrollment to another family in first position on the waiting list.
  4. After a family has confirmed enrollment, the school will ask the family to complete an enrollment packet and to provide specific information and documentation about the student, including prior school academic records and special education records (IEP/504 plans).
11. Waiting Lists –
  1. Any students who have applied to the school but were not selected through the lottery shall be placed on a waiting list in the order that they were drawn within the design of the lottery. This shall constitute the school’s official waiting list.
  2. Families who have expressed an interest in the school, either by contacting the school directly, attending an open house, or by any other contact, but have not submitted an enrollment application form will not be considered for the waiting list.
  3. When filling vacancies that occur during the school year, the school will offer enrollment to the student ranked in the first position on the waiting list as determined by the lottery. Should the family decline the enrollment offer, the school shall offer enrollment to the next ranked student until the enrollment seat is accepted. Additional steps may be required in the process when filling vacancies in the 10th, 11th and 12th grades.

4. Enrollment forms received after the lottery shall not be considered on the official waiting list. Such applications shall only be considered for enrollment once the waiting list established through the lottery has been exhausted.

## TAPA Teacher Qualifications

In accordance with ESEA Section 1111(h)(6) families RIGHT-TO-KNOW, TAPA: Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts is notifying every parent that TAPA is a Schoolwide Title I school. As a Title I school, you have the right to and may request information regarding the professional qualifications of your student’s classroom teacher. This information regarding the professional qualifications of your student’s classroom teachers includes, at a minimum, the following:

- Whether the teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.
- Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or another provisional status through which state qualification or licensing criteria have been waived.
- The baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree.
- Whether the student is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

If at any time your student has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher not highly qualified, the school will notify you. If you have questions, please feel free to contact the school at 401-432-7881. TAPA’s Title One Coordinator is Kevin Cordeiro

## Grading and Graduation at TAPA

The RI Board of Regents through the Secondary Regulations (L-6-3.0) has set the minimum requirements for earning an RI high school diploma. The regulations include, but are not limited to: Demonstrated proficiency in the core areas (English Language Arts, Math, Science, Historical Perspectives, the Performing Arts, World Languages and Technology), and completion of 20 courses (at minimum) and one Carnegie point for each full-year course. The courses as required by the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) are listed below.

### TAPA’s Graduation Requirements

Academic Area	Required Credits
English	4
Mathematics	4
Science (Laboratory & Computer) Courses	3
Historical Perspectives	3
Foreign Language	2 (of the same foreign language)
Arts Major Courses	4
Arts Major Practicum	3
Arts Minor	.75 (not required for graduation)
<b>Total Credits Required at TAPA</b>	<b>23</b>

## The Arts Audition Process

All TAPA students must complete an arts-area-specific promotion requirement -- the “Arts Audition Process” -- at the end of their 8th grade year (or the end of their first year in the TAPA Upper School, for those students admitted at the 9th grade level or above). The Arts Audition Process consists of three parts:

- An Admissions Interview modeled on a college interview;
- An Application Letter and Resume modeled on a job application; and
- An Audition, performed in front of a panel of industry-specific judges, modeled on the audition process students would undertake when applying to an art school and/or conservatory.

### Arts Major

Upon successful completion of their Arts Audition Process, students are admitted into an Arts Major. This involves the completion of a program of study in a specific field of the performing Arts (Dance, Film, Music or Theatre). Students must take a sequence of four courses in the specific Performing Art; each of these courses builds upon the previous course. Graduating 12th grade students must complete four credits in their Performing Art and an additional four credits in Arts Practicum. **If a student fails their Arts Major course(s), a change in Major and a new Arts Audition Process, are mandatory.**

### Arts Minor

TAPA students may also pursue an Arts Minor Program of Study. Students wishing to earn an Arts Minor in an additional art (Dance, Film, Music, or Theatre) must earn .75 credits in that Performing Art. A minor is not required for graduation.

## Performance Assessments for Graduation

The RI Board of Regents through the Secondary Regulations requires students to complete two performance assessments. TAPA’s Requirements are:

**1. Senior Thesis Performance/Screening in Arts Major:** This performance-based graduation requirement in each student’s art major is required by all students graduating from TAPA. Specific assignment criteria have been created by each art department and include a written research thesis, reflection, and public performance or screening. In addition, these senior thesis projects have a component from one or more of their academic courses integrated within the research and creation of the performance or screening. Additionally, successful completion of a thesis defense is a final requirement for all students taking Literature and Composition IV (12th grade English Language Arts).

**2. Comprehensive Course Assessments (Departmental Examinations after Each Course):** Departmental exams will be given in all major subjects at the mid-year and end of each course.

## Midterm and Final Exams

In order to properly prepare students for college, all TAPA students take Midterm Exams in all courses following the end of Quarter 2. This is an important tool to make sure students have learned what they need to be successful for the rest of the year. Participation in the *Winter Arts Festival* counts for the arts Midterm Exam grade.

Midterm Exams count for 10% of the student’s final year grade in each course. There are no grade-based exemptions for Midterm Exams.

All TAPA students take Final Exams in all courses following the end of Quarter 4. Experience with cumulative assessments is an essential part of college preparation. Participation in the end-of-year *ArtsFest* counts for the arts final exam grade.

Final Exams count for 10% of the student's final year grade in each course.

The eligibility process for a Final Exam exemption is as follows: 12th-grade students who exclusively earn "High Honors" in a class (an A- or above for Q1, Q2, Midterm, and Q3) are exempt from their exams in that same class. Teachers must approve exemptions of exams and submit a list of eligible students to the Guidance Counselor prior to the exam period. Final Exam exemptions do not apply to Arts classes; Arts Finals are mandatory for all students.

### **Makeup Policy for Midterm and Final Exams**

Students must be on time for Midterm and Final Exams: there will be no admittance after an exam has started. If the absence or lateness is determined "excused" by the Dean of Students, the student may make up the exam within the exam week without penalty. If the absence or lateness is determined "unexcused" by the Dean of Students, the student may make up the exam within the exam week with a 10-point (one letter grade) deduction. In either case, it is the student's responsibility to contact the teacher to set up an appropriate makeup appointment. Students with extenuating circumstances (i.e. long-term excused absence) may make up exams on an alternate schedule at the discretion of the Guidance Counselor.

## **Promotion and Retention**

TAPA's promotion and retention policy in grades 7-8 is designed to ensure that students make progress at a pace that will prepare them for success in TAPA's Upper School.

TAPA's promotion and retention policy for students in grades 9-12 is designed to ensure that students make progress at a pace that will result in them earning sufficient credits to graduate at the end of their senior year. Each student's place within their graduating class year is determined in accordance with minimum requirements for earning a TAPA high school diploma, as detailed in the chart under "TAPA's Graduation Requirements. Generally speaking, a TAPA Upper School student should earn at least seven credits yearly in order to graduate on time.

Students who fail one or two classes during the regular school year have the opportunity to make up those classes in Summer Skills during July-August in order to be promoted to the next grade.

- If they **pass** those classes in Summer Skills, they will be promoted to the next grade.
- If they **do not pass** those classes in Summer Skills, they must repeat the grade level.
- Students who fail three or more classes during the regular school year will be retained in grade and must repeat the year **and must complete Summer Skills to prepare for success in the repeated year.**

Failure to attend and complete the entire Summer Skills Program will impact the student's status in regard to retention and grade placement. The rules and attendance policies of Summer Skills stand alone and are significantly stricter than the regular school year given the shortened nature of the program. The full policies and procedures of Summer Skills are detailed in the Summer Skills section of this handbook.

## Graduation Ceremony Participation

In order to walk the stage at the annual graduation ceremony, a TAPA student must be short no more than one credit due to course failure and meet the following criteria:

1. The student must be able to reasonably complete the one credit during the immediately following summer school session of the same school year. Note: students are not eligible for summer school if they have attended less than 75% of the regularly scheduled days of the class that they have failed.
2. The student and their parent/guardian must sign a written agreement stating that the student will attend summer school. The summer school agreement, including the proposal for an alternative summer school institution (if applicable), must be received no later than two weeks prior to the graduation date. Students who have received summer school warning notices are strongly encouraged to submit an agreement in case of failure.

## Alternative Learning Plans Policy

TAPA shall deliver education programming to all students in accordance with its charter and mission. With this purpose in mind, TAPA acknowledges that not every student is able to receive his/her education in the same fashion. Therefore, where additional programs and/or environments may facilitate meeting the needs of students and the mission of TAPA, alternative learning plans may be established.

For the purpose of this Policy, alternative learning plans are student-specific programs developed by the student, the student's parent or guardian, a member of TAPA's administration, and the school counselor in the student's school. The plan should be designed to provide an alternative, age-appropriate, rigorous and relevant educational program that provides continued work toward earning a high school diploma or its equivalent.

All alternative learning plans shall include, at a minimum, the following:

- A description of the alternative learning program that the student will attend, the dates that the student is expected to attend, and other conditions for enrollment in the program that must be met by the student.
- The outcome upon the completion of the alternative learning plan (e.g, a high school diploma, enrollment in college, attainment of a GED, enrollment in an apprenticeship program, etc.)

Prior to development and implementation, any alternative program shall have been discussed with and received the endorsement of a member of TAPA's administration and the family/guardian(s) of the student involved. If the student is over the age of majority, the student shall endorse the alternative program if he/she is legally capable of doing so.

Prior to TAPA's acceptance of an alternative learning plan, the student or parent or guardian must bring evidence, such as a document signed by the alternative program provider, that the student is accepted into and has a place in an alternative learning program prior to the approval of the plan

Alternative programs shall comply with all policies and regulations that TAPA's traditional programs. Specifically, alternative learning plans shall:

- Include age-appropriate academic rigor and the flexibility to incorporate the student's interests and manner of learning. These plans may include but are not limited to, such components, or combination of components, of extended learning opportunities as independent study, private

instruction, performing groups, internships, community service, apprenticeships, and online courses that are currently funded and available to the school department and/or the community.

- Be developed, and amended if necessary, in consultation with the student, a school guidance counselor, the school principal, and at least one parent or guardian of the student, and submitted to the Assistant Head of School for approval.

Alternative programs shall be approved by the Board of Trustees prior to implementation.

TAPA shall notify students and parent(s)/guardian(s) that if the Assistant Head of School does not approve the alternative-learning plan, the parent or guardian of the student may appeal such a decision to the Board of Trustees. A parent or guardian may appeal the decision of the Board of Trustees to the Commissioner of the Rhode Island Department of Education in accordance with Rhode Island law.

Students participating in alternative learning programs shall remain enrolled at TAPA until completion of their program, obtaining their diploma, or until they are permitted by law to withdraw from school. If TAPA learns that a student enrolled in an alternative learning program is, in fact, not attending or participating in the program and not participating in the curriculum of TAPA, TAPA's administration shall report the student as being truant.

Alternative programs shall not include private schooling, homeschooling, high school equivalency programs, or gifted student programs.

## **Grading At TAPA**

### **Grade Components / Weights**

In all classes, certain categories of work are given “weights” to determine a student’s final overall grade.

- 10% Homework
- 15% Quizzes
- 20% Participation/Classwork
- 25% Tests
- 30% Projects and Performances

### **Minimum Number of Assignments per Quarter**

TAPA teachers strive to give a minimum number of assignments in each category each quarter. Minimums are established departmentally specific to the needs of each department (i.e. Science may require a higher number of projects). These minimums are shared and monitored by Lead Teachers for their specific departments.

The minimums below are the *schoolwide minimums* for any TAPA teacher in any department.

- 5 homework assignments
- 5 participation / classwork assignments
- 5 quizzes
- 2 tests
- 2 projects or performances

### **Report Card Grades and Comments**

- For every class, each student will receive a letter grade between A and F.

- For every class, each student will receive a narrative comment on their report card. This comment, between 2-3 sentences long, will provide students and families with an explanation for the grade(s) earned by the student, as well as areas in which that student could improve.

#### Grade Book Expectations

- Each teacher’s Skyward grade book will be finalized and made up-to-date no less frequently than on the 1st and 15th of every month. TAPA provides one day per week that is “meeting-free” for teachers to use for grading.
- Students have real-time access to their grades in every class. Students are expected to check their grades no less frequently than on the 1st and 15th of every month.

### Quarter End Dates and Report Card Posting

Each quarter at TAPA is approximately 10 weeks long. The last day of each quarter is shared on the TAPA calendar. Teachers submit students’ final quarter grades to Skyward within one week following the last day of the quarter. Those grades will be accessible to students and families within three days of submission (i.e. if grades are due on a Friday, report cards will be available by the following Wednesday). Printed report cards will be distributed to students via Advisory.

### Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent Conferences afford students, teachers, and families the opportunity to discuss any areas requiring improvement and develop plans for attaining proficiency by the end of the school year. Additional meetings to discuss students’ progress can be set by the parent or teacher at any time, as needed. We will make every effort to keep you informed about your student’s progress, but you should always feel free to call your student’s Advisor, particularly if you have any concerns.

TAPA runs an open-house approach to parent-teacher conferences. Families don't need to sign up for a teacher ahead of time. Rather, they can report to the rooms they want to visit upon arrival and sign in. In order to meet with as many families as possible:

- Teachers will keep chairs outside of their classroom door for families to wait.
- Teachers will provide a sign-in sheet near their door to determine the order of waiting families.
- Teachers will limit conferences to 5-10 minutes and will schedule a future appointment with families if additional time is needed.
- Teachers will conclude all meetings by encouraging further questions and giving the parent their TAPA e-mail address.

### Grading Percentages and Grade Point Values

Percentage Range	Letter Grade	Unweighted Grade Point Value
97-100	A+	4.3
94-96	A	4.0
90-93	A-	3.7
87-89	B+	3.3
84-86	B	3.0



80-83	B-	2.7
77-79	C+	2.3
74-76	C	2.0
70-73	C-	1.7
67-69	D+	1.3
64-66	D	1.0
60-63	D-	0.7
59-00	F	0.0

## GPA Calculation

At the end of each school year, each student’s cumulative unweighted and weighted GPAs will be calculated on a 4.0+ scale. TAPA assigns an additional 0.5 to the total grade point value of each Honors-level or Advanced Course Network (non-college credit) class and 1.0 to each Advanced Placement or Dual Enrollment (college credit) class. The Guidance Counselor calculates GPA.

## Honors and Awards

TAPA honors students for their dedication and commitment to their studies and the school community. Thus, at the end of each quarter, students who have met the criteria below will be awarded the following recognitions at the Honors Breakfast:

- High Honor Roll: Students receiving exclusively grades of A- and above are eligible for High Honor Roll.
- Honor Roll: Students receiving exclusively grades of B- or above are eligible for Honor Roll.
- Perfect Attendance: Students who have been present and on time to school every day throughout the quarter are eligible for Perfect Attendance.
- Excellent Attendance: Students who have been present at school every day and late fewer than five (5) times per quarter are eligible for Excellent Attendance.
- Head of School’s List – Recognizes exceptional student growth and the fostering of a Growth Mindset, a concept developed by psychologist Carol Dweck: *“In a growth mindset, people believe that their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work—brains and talent are just the starting point. This view creates a love of learning and resilience that is essential for great accomplishment... Students who embrace growth mindsets—the belief that they can learn more or become smarter if they work hard and persevere—may learn more, learn it more quickly, and view challenges and failures as opportunities to improve their learning and skills.”*

## Class Rank, Salutatorian, and Valedictorian

Class rank is reported as an exact integer figure according to GPA. Class standing will be determined first in June of the student’s 11<sup>th</sup> grade year, then again in February of the 12<sup>th</sup> grade year. The final class standing will be determined in May of the student’s senior year. The graduating senior with the highest cumulative GPA will serve as Valedictorian for the senior class. The graduating senior with the second-highest cumulative GPA will serve as Salutatorian for the senior class. The senior class Valedictorian and Salutatorian will be announced and celebrated annually at the Q3 Honors Breakfast.

# The TAPA Dress Code

*Showing that we are:*

*“Ready. Ready to teach, to learn, to create, to express ourselves, ready for whatever comes next.”*

## **Dress Code Philosophy**

TAPA’s student dress code supports equitable educational access and is written in a manner that does not reinforce stereotypes. To ensure effective and equitable enforcement of this dress code, school staff shall enforce the dress code consistently and in a manner that does not reinforce or increase marginalization or oppression of any group based on race, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, household income or body type/size.

## **Our values are:**

- All students should be able to dress comfortably for school and engage in the educational environment without fear of or actual unnecessary discipline or body shaming.
- All students and staff should understand that they are responsible for managing their own personal "distractions" without regulating individual students' clothing/self-expression.
- Student dress code enforcement should not result in unnecessary barriers to school attendance.
- School staff should be trained and able to use student/body-positive language to explain the code and to address code violations.
- Teachers should focus on teaching without the additional burden of dress code enforcement.
- Reasons for conflict and inconsistent and/or inequitable discipline should be minimized whenever possible.

## **Our student dress code is designed to accomplish several goals:**

- Maintain a safe learning environment in classes where protective/supportive clothing is needed, such as chemistry/biology (eye or body protection), dance (bare feet, tights/leotards), etc.
- Allow students to wear clothing of their choice that is comfortable.
- Allow students to wear clothing that expresses their self-identified gender.
- Allow students to wear religious attire without fear of discipline or discrimination.
- Prevent students from wearing clothing or accessories with offensive images or language, including profanity, hate speech, and pornography.
- Prevent students from wearing clothing or accessories that denote, suggest, display or reference alcohol, drugs, or related paraphernalia or other illegal conduct or activities.
- Prevent students from wearing clothing or accessories that will interfere with the operation of the school, disrupt the educational process, invade the rights of others, or create a reasonably foreseeable risk of such interference or invasion of rights.
- Prevent students from wearing clothing or accessories that reasonably can be construed as being or including content that is racist, lewd, vulgar, or obscene, or that reasonably can be construed as containing fighting words, speech that incites others to imminent lawless action, defamatory speech, or threats to others.
- Ensure that all students are treated equitably regardless of race, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, household income, or body type/size.

## **Dress Code**

TAPA expects that all students will dress in a way that is appropriate for the school day or for any school-sponsored event. Student dress choices should respect TAPA's intent to sustain a community that is inclusive of a diverse range of identities. The primary responsibility for a student's attire resides with the student and their parent(s) or guardian(s).

TAPA is responsible for seeing that student attire does not interfere with the health or safety of any student, that student attire does not contribute to a hostile or intimidating atmosphere for any student, and that dress code enforcement does not reinforce or increase marginalization or oppression of any group based on race, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, household income, or body type/size.

### **1. Basic Principle: Certain body parts must be covered for all students at all times.**

Clothes must be worn in a way such that genitals, buttocks, breasts, and nipples are fully covered with opaque fabric. All items listed below must meet this basic principle.

### **2. Students Must Wear\*:**

- A Shirt (with fabric in the front, back, and on the sides under the arms), AND
- Pants/jeans or the equivalent (for example, a skirt, sweatpants, leggings, a dress or shorts), AND
- Shoes
- \*Courses that include attire as part of the curriculum (for example, professionalism, public speaking, job readiness, dance outfits, theatre costumes, etc.) may, as needed, require assignment-specific dress).

### **3. Students May Wear:**

- Hats. Hats must allow the face to be visible to staff, and not interfere with the line of sight of any student or staff.
- Religious headwear
- Hoodie sweatshirts (wearing the hood overhead is allowed, but the face and ears must be visible to school staff).
- Fitted pants, including opaque leggings, yoga pants and “skinny jeans”
- Ripped jeans, as long as underwear and buttocks are not exposed.
- Tank tops, including spaghetti straps; halter tops
- Athletic attire
- Visible waistbands on undergarments or visible straps on undergarments worn under other clothing (as long as this is done in a way that does not violate Section 1 above).

### **4. Students Cannot Wear:**

- Violent language or images.
- Images or language depicting drugs or alcohol or any illegal item or activity.
- Hate speech, profanity, pornography.
- Images or language that creates a hostile or intimidating environment based on any protected class or consistently marginalized groups.
- Any clothing that reveals visible undergarments (visible waistbands/visible straps are allowed)
- Swimsuits (except as required in class or athletic practice).
- Accessories that could be considered dangerous or could be used as a weapon.
- Any item that obscures the face or ears (except as a religious observance).

## **5. Dress Code Enforcement**

To ensure effective and equitable enforcement of this dress code, school staff shall enforce the dress code consistently using the requirements below. School administration and staff shall not have the discretion to vary the requirements in ways that lead to discriminatory enforcement.

- Students will only be removed from spaces, hallways, or classrooms as a result of a dress code violation as outlined in Sections 1 and 4 above.
- Students in violation of Section 1 and/or 4 will be provided three options to be dressed more to code during the school day:
  - Students will be asked to put on their own alternative clothing, if already available at school, to be dressed more to code for the remainder of the day.
  - Students will be provided with temporary school clothing to be dressed more to code for the remainder of the day.
  - If necessary, students' parents may be called during the school day to bring alternative clothing for the student to wear for the remainder of the day.
- No student should be affected by dress code enforcement because of racial identity, sex assigned at birth, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, cultural or religious identity, household income, body size/type, or body maturity.

School staff shall not enforce the school's dress code more strictly against transgender and gender-nonconforming students than other students. These dress code guidelines shall apply to regular school days and summer school days, as well as any school-related events and activities, such as graduation ceremonies, dances, and prom. Students who feel they have been subject to discriminatory enforcement of the dress code should contact the Dean of Students.

## **Summer Skills (Summer School) at TAPA**

### **The purpose of Summer Skills**

The purpose of the TAPA Summer Skills Program is to provide additional instructional time for students who have not earned academic credit in their core academic classes. This program will provide targeted, intensive skill-building support and effective interventions for students. The anticipated outcome of the TAPA Summer Skills program is the enhancement of the skills needed to succeed in the subject area(s) in which the student is receiving extra support. This will be measured and tracked by pre, mid, and post-assessments.

### **Notification About Summer Skills**

Between February and March, students and their families/guardians will receive notification if the student is at risk for attending Summer Skills. Those students who are notified will include students who have a failing mid-year average (less than 60%) in any class; it will also include students who have failed a Science, Historical Perspectives, or Spanish class previously and have a failing mid-year average (less than 60%) in either subject. Follow-up notification to those families of students who may be required to participate in Summer Skills will be sent in May. Final confirmation of the requirement to attend Summer Skills will be available to families before the end of the school year in June and no later than five days prior to the start of Summer Skills classes.

## **Summer Skills Course Content and Grading**

Students enrolled in the Summer Skills Program classes will be required to complete work that covers the skill sets needed to succeed in future classes and are aligned to the CCS (Common Core Standards). They will also be required to pass an assessment that measures their proficiency in these skills.

Upon successful completion of the Summer Skills Program, the student's transcript will include both the original grade earned during the regular school year, along with the Summer Skills grade, thus giving the student earned academic credit for the class while still providing a transparent view of the student's courses to colleges. Both the original grade and Summer Skills grade are factored into GPA.

Successful completion of the summer skills program includes but is not limited to:

- The student has attended ALL classes on time
- The student has completed ALL required assignments
- The student has successfully passed the required assessments

A student missing one or more of these components runs the risk of not successfully completing the Summer Skills Program.

If the student does not successfully complete the Summer Skills Program, the Summer Skills Coordinator or a member of the TAPA Admin Team will meet with the parent/guardian and student to discuss the best path forward for the student, and the following may occur:

- The student will need to repeat the grade-level, to earn the required number of academic credits.
- The student will need to repeat the class during the school year to earn the required academic credit.
- The student will progress to the next grade but will be short of the required number of academic credits and will have to attend a summer program (or equivalent) before becoming eligible for graduation.
- The student will be short academic credits and not be eligible for graduation

## **Summer Skills Behavior Expectations**

It is required that all students behave in a proper manner and do the work that has been assigned. If a student is not following classroom instructions or being disruptive to the educational process in any way, the student will be referred to the Summer Skills Program Coordinator. If the student is incapable of returning to class or continues to disrupt the educational process, the student will be sent home. This will be considered an absence from the program. If the disruptions continue, a parent conference will be scheduled, and the student could be dismissed from the program. Students who are removed from the Summer Skills Program for behavioral reasons will also face further consequences as outlined under Summer Skills Course Content and Grading.

Removal from the Summer Skills Program for behavioral reasons could lead to forfeiting the opportunity to attend Summer Skills in the future.

## **Summer Attendance Expectations**

The purpose of the Summer Skills Program is to help the students succeed and obtain the skills they need to be academically successful. This cannot be achieved if they do not attend all of the classes as assigned. Doctor's appointments, vacations/trips, babysitting, jobs, etc. should be planned around the Summer Program schedule. No absence or early dismissal will be considered excused or acceptable unless it is an emergency situation and documentation can be provided. Without proper documentation,

any absence or early dismissal will be considered unexcused. PLEASE NOTE: Doctor's notes, court documentation, etc. are considered proper documentation, while a handwritten note from a parent/guardian, and/or a phone call, is not considered proper documentation. Missing Summer Skills as a result of an unexcused absence may result in removal from the program.

The consequences for missing the Summer Skills Program are as follows:

- 1 absence/tardy: Parent will be called and no credit for the work missed
- 2 absences/tardy: Parent conference and possible removal from the Summer Skills Program
- 3 absences/tardy: Removal from the Summer Skills Program.

## **Attendance at TAPA**

Classroom activities are purposeful and essential to the learning process. The daily exchange between and among students and teachers is essential to student learning. Therefore, students are required to be at TAPA, on time, every day. Parental influence is critical to supporting regular school attendance. It is a joint responsibility of the families/guardians of students and the students themselves to ensure regular daily attendance.

A student's attendance is an important portion of their course grade. Students who miss 10 or more days of any class within a semester (or five or more days during a quarter) due to class absences, and/or habitual lateness, will see a negative impact on their grades and may lose credit for that class.

### **Excused Absences**

The most common reason for a student to be excused from school is an illness. If a student is seriously ill, their parent/caregiver should contact the office after 8 am to inform the school of the student's absence. For illnesses longer than two consecutive days, during the course of the school year, TAPA will require more formal documentation, such as a doctor's note. Without a doctor's note, the student's absence will be considered an unexcused absence.

Other acceptable reasons for a student to miss school are: court dates, college visits, religious holidays, or bereavement. If a parent/guardian wishes for a student to miss school for an extended period of time or for reasons other than these, advance approval is required. The parent/guardian must submit a *Request to Miss School* form, available in the main office, to the Dean of Students two weeks prior to the scheduled absence. The Dean of Students will consider the student's grades, attendance history, adherence to the request protocol, and other factors when deciding whether to approve or deny the request and will communicate their decision to the student, family, and TAPA staff.

Students may not participate in rehearsals, events, or afterschool activities on any day they are absent.

### **Unexcused Absences and Tardiness**

An unexcused absence occurs when a student is not present at school without acceptable cause. After three unexcused absences in a quarter, families/guardians will be notified via mail or email of the excessive absences. Continued unexcused absences will result in additional consequences, including academic consequences, and up to referral to Truancy Court in accordance with the RI General Laws.

Tardiness disrupts the learning process. Students who are tardy miss important instruction. School begins at 8:00. Students who arrive after 8:05 must get a late pass in the office. Students who arrive more than 30 minutes late to school have missed more than half of any given class and will be considered to be unexcused absent from that class.

The consequences for being tardy and/or unexcused absent from school increase based on the number of occurrences, as follows:

**Step 1:**

- |                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| 1st Unexcused Absence/Tardy: | Warning   |
| 2nd Unexcused Absence/Tardy: | Detention and a Call to parent/guardian   |
| 3rd Unexcused Absence/Tardy: | The Dean of Students will notify parents/guardians via telephone calls, letters, and/or conduct school conferences to discuss student's attendance. |
| 4th Unexcused Absence/Tardy: | In School Solutions. Call to parent/guardian and mandatory conference. Possible beginning of truancy referral                                       |

**Step 2:**

Five unexcused absences, tardies, and/or early dismissals will prompt a telephone call, a written letter to the parent/guardian, and a mandatory parent conference requesting an explanation. In addition; 1 day of In School Solutions will be assigned. An internal review by the Dean of Students and Administration may occur depending upon circumstances. Beginning stages of truancy referral will begin depending on circumstances.

**Step 3:**

After more than five cumulative unexcused absences, tardies, and/or early dismissals, a letter will be sent, and/or a conference will be scheduled with families/guardians, the student, the Dean of Students, Administration, Guidance and other professionals, as needed. Detention and ISS will be assigned per the DOS and Administration recommendation.

**If a student continues to be truant and or tardy after it is brought to both the parent and child's attention, and the school has tried various interventions, additional consequences, including academic consequences and a truancy petition will be filed with Truancy Court in accordance with the RI General Laws.**

*CHAPTER 16-19: Compulsory Attendance/Attendance required.*

*(a) Every child who has completed, or will have completed, six (6) years of life on or before September 1 of any school year, or is enrolled in kindergarten, and has not completed eighteen (18) years of life, shall regularly attend some public day school during all the days and hours that the public schools are in session in the city or town in which the child resides.*

*Every person having under his or her control a child, as described in this section, shall cause the child to attend school as required by this section, and for every neglect of this duty, the person having control of the child shall be fined not exceeding **fifty dollars (\$50.00) for each day, or part of a day, that the child fails to attend school**, and if the total of these days is **more than thirty (30) school days** during any school year, then the person shall, upon conviction, be **imprisoned not exceeding six (6) months** or shall be fined not more than **five hundred dollars (\$500)**, or both*

## **Make-Up Work**

It is the responsibility of the student to arrange with their teacher to make up academic work missed due to an excused absence. Upon returning to school, the student will have five school days to make up any missing work. Make-up work will not be provided by any teacher for an unexcused absence.

## **Early Dismissals**

Dismissals from school for any reason are considered part of a student's attendance record. In keeping with our efforts to maximize instructional time, early dismissal from school is discouraged and will be granted only for business that cannot be conducted after the close of school. Reasons for early dismissal shall be limited to: illness, doctor's appointment, court appearance, family emergency verified by the parent/guardian, educational reasons given prior approval by the school administration.

A written request for early dismissal signed by the student's parent/guardian must be presented to the office on the day of the early dismissal. This request must contain the student's name, date, time, the reason for dismissal, telephone number for verification, and parent/guardian signature. A form is available in the office for this purpose. The School Nurse Teacher is responsible for early dismissals due to illness, and parent/guardian verification prior to dismissal is required. Parental phone calls requesting early dismissal are discouraged and will be approved by Administration only in the event of emergencies.

## **Extended Absences**

Extended absences due to medical or other personal circumstances should be discussed with the Dean of Students. In these instances, the parent/guardian must contact the school in order to discuss the situation and determine the best course of action for the student's makeup work. At Guidance Counselor discretion, students who have missed significant amounts of class time due to extended excused absences may receive temporary grades of "Incomplete" until the student has reasonable opportunities to make up the work. This may or may not include Homebound Instruction, outlined below:

### **Homebound Instruction for Students Unable to Attend School**

Students who are unable to attend school because of illness, disability or extended suspension may be eligible to receive Homebound Instruction at the minimum rate of one hour per day for each school day missed; i.e., five hours of Homebound Instruction each week. A team with knowledge of the student's educational needs determines eligibility for Homebound Instruction. It is meant to be a temporary situation. Homebound Instruction occurs at a mutually agreed upon time, in a mutually agreed-upon public location.

#### **Facts About Homebound Instruction**

- A student who qualifies for Homebound Instruction remains on TAPA's official attendance and class lists.
- The Assistant Head of School facilitates the setup of Homebound Instruction.
- The curriculum for the student is the responsibility of the teachers in whose classes the student is enrolled.
- The exchange of materials for Homebound Instruction is the responsibility of the Homebound Instruction tutor.
- The Homebound Instruction tutor will contact the student's teachers for specific questions regarding assignments. The Homebound Instruction tutor will administer and grade teacher-made



assignments, when provided with a key, and will evaluate homework unless the teacher desires to assume this responsibility.

- Upon the student's return to school, the home instructor will meet with the student, parent, teacher(s), and a member of the Administrative Team to ensure a successful return to the school program.

Classroom teachers are expected to supply course outlines, assignments, worksheets and a teacher's edition text, if available, to the home instructor to facilitate a smooth transition to the student's Homebound Instruction plan. This will also assist the home instructor in keeping the student abreast of what is being taught in the classroom.

### **Homebound Instruction Tutor Responsibilities**

- Deliver the instructional plans as prescribed by the teacher.
- Plan timely delivery and collection of student assignments and return all completed assignments to the teachers.
- Keep a record of all assignments given/received.
- Keep accurate student attendance.
- Collaborate with the teacher and Assistant Head of School regarding instructional progress.
- Keep the student informed about their progress and the grade being earned as given by the teacher.
- The homebound tutor is asked to summarize the student's progress in a report to the Assistant Head of School, sent every two weeks with a written summary of progress, current class grade, and a brief plan for the upcoming month.

## **Afterschool Programming and Tutoring at TAPA**

### **Afterschool Programming**

Teacher-led afterschool programming begins at either 3 pm or 4 pm daily. There is a TAPA Administrator on-site for afterschool programming from 3 pm-5:30 pm

Upper School students may leave TAPA at dismissal and return for programming. They cannot be late to programming, and if they are, will be asked to leave.

Lower School students must remain at TAPA in the library area until programming begins. On any tutoring days, everyone waiting for afterschool programming must go to tutoring.

**Behavior and Discipline:** The behavioral expectations of the school day continue after school. Any behavioral infractions will be reported to the Dean of Students. Any students lingering afterschool, but not in a program, will be asked to leave. Refusal will lead to further consequences.

**Removal from an Afterschool Program:** If an afterschool programmer or administrator decides a student's behavior means they can no longer attend afterschool programming, they will be immediately removed, and a parent meeting will be set up. The programmer and TAPA Administration will determine the length of time for the removal.

**Snacks:** TAPA offers snacks to students attending afterschool programs. Daily, the afterschool programmer will send a student representative to TAPA Administration at either 3:15 pm or 4:15 pm,

with a note that says how many students are attending afterschool programming that day. These numbers will be used by TAPA Administration to track snack usage.

**Rosters:** TAPA Administration will request teachers keep rosters updated on a shared Google Drive file.

**Tutoring:** Tutoring is offered by appointment, by all TAPA full-time teachers and Artists in Residence. If a student is recommended for afterschool remediation, a schedule for the student will be created by a collaboration of the student, parent, teachers of classes where the student struggles, the tutor, and appropriate administrative staff.

### **End of Day Procedures for TAPA Staff:**

1. Flip-up all chairs onto the tables/desks so that maintenance staff can vacuum/sweep.
2. Close and lock your windows.
3. Take your classroom trash out to the hallway/common area trash can.
4. Turn out all the lights.
5. Close and lock your classroom door.
6. If you do have an afterschool program you must also:
  1. Escort all students downstairs to the Main Lobby, where students must either:
    1. Exit the building or
    2. Remain in the Main Lobby to wait for a ride;
      1. Upper School students may wait under the supervision of the Front Desk Receptionist or Administrator on duty, if available.
      2. Teachers must wait with Lower School students until they are picked up.

NOTE: Students may not linger unsupervised in hallways, bathrooms, or classrooms.

**Athletics:** High School Athletics are not a part of TAPA's afterschool programming. All athletics decisions must be addressed to TAPA administration so that students can try out and play for other high school teams without academic interference.

## **Transportation To and From TAPA**

Students are permitted to walk or bike to and from TAPA, be driven to TAPA, and/or take public transportation. Students may be eligible for transportation on the yellow school bus. If you would like to request yellow school bus transportation for your student, please submit a Transportation Request Form to the Main Office. Upper School students may be eligible for a RIPTA Bus Pass: If you would like to request a bus pass for your student, please submit a Transportation Request Form to the Main Office. TAPA distributes bus passes monthly. Please ensure that your student safeguards his/her bus pass, as TAPA does not have replacement passes.

### **Bus Safety**

Many students attending TAPA have the option of riding the bus to school. Riding the bus is a privilege. This privilege may be temporarily denied or permanently revoked if the misconduct of a student jeopardizes the safe operation of the school bus, bus riders, or other drivers in other vehicles.

In order to ensure that students are safe while riding the bus, we expect all of our students to behave responsibly and respectfully:

- Students are expected to follow directions from bus personnel willingly and promptly.
- Students are expected to respect each other and to respect property.
- Students are expected to use appropriate language.
- Students are expected to refrain from throwing things out of the windows of the bus.
- Students are expected to keep their hands, feet, and arms inside the bus at all times

Violations of bus safety policy will result in disciplinary action. Extreme behavior will result in an immediate five-day suspension from the bus and families will have to arrange alternate transportation to and from TAPA during that period of time. Any damage to the bus will require parental/family compensation to the bus company. TAPA reserves the right to permanently remove students from the bus if the five-day policy is continuously violated.

## **Health Information**

TAPA makes every effort to ensure the well-being of the whole student. TAPA is equipped with a full-time School Nurse Teacher, two part-time School Social Workers, and a full-time Guidance Counselor.

### **Nursing and Mental Health Support**

The School Social Worker and Guidance Counselor are available to all students as needed. The Guidance Counselor is a professional educator who works diligently to support the everyday challenges faced during middle and high school years. The Guidance Counselor's goal is to promote and enhance student learning. At TAPA, our counselor will support all students in various areas such as academics, social/emotional health, career exploration, and post-secondary plans. The counselor will work closely with all teachers, staff, administrators, and families to ensure the most positive outcome for each individual student. Together, the team will help students create a pathway that best suits their needs.

Students also have access to the School Social Workers during the school day. The purpose of all counseling at the school is to address behaviors that impact school performance. Teachers, support staff, or Advisors may refer students to the School Social Worker. The School Social Worker works on behalf of the student to examine and address issues that may be negatively affecting her/their/his academic performance. The following are examples of issues that commonly influence negative academic performance:

- Emotional/social/behavioral issues
- Substance use issues
- Stress and anxiety

The School Social Worker is available to families/guardians to help access resources, fill out applications, and find services or resources in their communities.

TAPA has a School Nurse Teacher who is on-site full time every day. The School Nurse Teacher is available to all students as needed.

### **Physical Exams and Vaccination Status**

All students must have physical examination records and immunization forms on file prior to beginning classes. As the state requires that these forms be on file, TAPA will work with students and families to ensure that they are submitted

## **Over-the-Counter Permission Forms and Health Histories**

Over-the-Counter Permission forms should be filled out at the start of each school year, either giving or denying permission for the TAPA School Nurse Teacher to give the stocked over-the-counter medications to your student when not feeling well.

Health Histories are also required at the start of each school year. These are completed by families and give the School Nurse Teacher insight as to any long-standing, or new, health issues to be aware of for each student.

All health-related forms can be found on the School Health page of TAPA's website. Families can download and print the forms they select. The School Nurse Teacher will provide hard copies if needed.

### **Medication Policy**

- 1) All prescription medications to be taken at school require the proper Dispensing Medicine at School form completed and signed by the student's physician, and the medicine itself must be delivered in a prescription bottle with the student's and doctor's names, the medication, dosage, times to be given, and route to be given. Most pharmacies will, if requested, provide a spare duplicate RX bottle for the purpose of splitting the tablets or capsules between home and school. The medicine will be kept in a locked medicine cabinet in the nurse's office and administered by the School Nurse Teacher or supervised by her designee if the School Nurse Teacher is absent.
- 2) There are two exceptions to this rule:
  - a) An asthmatic student may carry his/her inhaler on their person for easy access (safety). If this is the case, there does need to be a completed Inhaler at School form signed by both the physician and parent, noting that the child is mature enough to self-administer it.
  - b) When a student is taking an over-the-counter drug not offered in the nurse's office (acetaminophen, ibuprofen, antacids, or throat lozenges) that student may personally carry ONE DAY's dosage with them to take at the appropriate time, but the student or parent must notify the School Nurse Teacher of this plan. Otherwise, a student cannot carry or take any medication to school.

### **Anaphylaxis Policy**

#### *Definitions*

- A. "Anaphylaxis" refers to an acute, potentially fatal, allergic reaction to a substance (an allergen, such as stinging insects, foods, and medications) that is induced by exposure to the substance/allergen. Manifestations of anaphylaxis may be cutaneous (such as hives, itchiness, swelling); cardiorespiratory (swelling of tongue, throat, wheezing, difficulty breathing, low blood pressure); central nervous system (lethargy, coma); and others.
- B. "EpiPen" refers to an Epinephrine auto-injector or other similar device that is used for the automatic injection of epinephrine into the human body to prevent or reverse the effects of anaphylaxis
- C. "Trained personnel" refers to a School Nurse **or** other school administrator or teacher who might be administering an EpiPen in case of anaphylaxis and who has been trained and is competent in its administration. Training shall include: how to access students' critical medical information and allergies, signs, and symptoms of anaphylactic shock; proper storage and administration of the EpiPen, the importance of accessing 911 emergency medical system; and preparation for transport of a student experiencing anaphylaxis (TAPA's Emergency Procedures), and how to prevent the occurrence, including but not limited to maintaining a nut-free policy in the school.

### *Administration and Parental Responsibilities, and Management of Anaphylaxis*

1. As soon as each school year begins, Families/legal guardians must notify the school of the student's allergy and the need to administer the EpiPen in case of anaphylaxis.
2. Families/legal guardians will provide a physician's order for the EpiPen at school, a food allergy action plan, and a filled prescription (that student's EpiPen). Students may carry their EpiPen on their person and should keep a backup in the nurse's office in case a student forgets or cannot locate it.
3. Once notified of a student's serious allergy, the School Nurse Teacher will inform the kitchen, if appropriate, and the administration. There will be a critical alert placed in that student's Skyward profile for viewing by teachers. The School Nurse Teacher will also develop an IHP (Individualized Healthcare Plan) for such students.
4. A student may self-administer the EpiPen in a case of anaphylaxis if there is medical authorization and a corresponding prescription.
5. TAPA will keep "house" EpiPens available on each floor of the school building for easy and quick access should one be needed, for students or staff with known allergens, and also for those with unknown allergies in case of emergency.
6. TAPA shall have at least one person available who is trained and competent in the administration of the EpiPen, other than the School Nurse Teacher.
7. At regular intervals, the School Nurse or other trained personnel shall ensure that the expiration date of all epinephrine auto-injectors has not lapsed.

In the event of anaphylaxis, School Nurse or other trained personnel may administer an EpiPen when anaphylaxis is imminent, on an identified student, or, a previously unidentified student with the signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis.

1. Immediately after administration of the EpiPen, the emergency medical system (911) shall be called, the student shall be transported promptly to an acute-care hospital for medical evaluation and follow-up, and the student's families/guardians shall be notified. If the epinephrine auto-injector has been administered by trained personnel other than the School Nurse, the School Nurse shall also be notified immediately.
2. One staff person shall go to the hospital with the student and provide support until the parent/guardian arrives, following TAPA's Emergency Protocols.
3. These procedures shall be reviewed on an annual basis, and approved, with or without modification, by the R.I. League of Charter Schools' medical doctor.
4. The person rendering this care will not be liable for civil damages: Section 16-21-22 of the Rhode Island General Laws provides: no school teacher, school administrator, or school health care personnel shall be liable for civil damages which may result from acts or omissions in the use of epinephrine which may constitute ordinary negligence. This immunity does not apply to acts or omissions constituting gross negligence or willful or wanton conduct.

## **Medical Emergency Procedure**

This procedure is in effect whenever a medical issue is thought to have become an emergency, regardless of what has occurred (whether chronic or acute illness, injury or unknown cause). Some examples are (but not limited to) seizures, diabetic crisis, non-responsiveness for any reason, severe bleeding or severe pain, difficulty breathing, severe allergic reaction.

If a student has a known/reported health condition, there will be an Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP) written for that student, accessible in Skyward. A student's IHP may require activating the Medical Emergency Procedure, below:

If any members of the TAPA staff suspect a true emergency\*, they must activate this plan to ensure the safety of any/all students, staff, or family ensemble members.

\* Medical Emergency defined: An acute injury or illness that poses an immediate risk to a person's life or long-term health and requires immediate action.

If Medical Emergency suspected:

1. Text Admin and Nurse for immediate support - name the student, classroom, and issue. Request that Admin call 911.
2. Clear all other students from the room and render first aid to the best of your ability as appropriate to the given situation
3. Admin will call 911. Support Staff will print student's emergency information from Skyward
4. Admin will ensure that other students from that classroom are covered by another staff member if needed
5. The nurse will attend to the student and take over on first aid, and provide care until 911 arrives
6. Admin or Support Staff will call the parent and/or emergency contact to notify them that 911 has been called for transport to the hospital
7. When 911 arrives, the emergency workers completely take over care. The nurse will provide known information to the paramedics and give an Emergency Information sheet printed from Skyward.
8. Admin, Support Staff, and Nurse will then decide who is accompanying the student to the hospital

### **Communications**

If your student requires any medical attention due to a health condition (treatments, prescriptions, accommodations, etc.) please contact the School Nurse Teacher immediately to discuss the condition. Timely and clear communication is key to ensure your student's health and safety. If a student has long-term health needs, families are expected to be present to participate in the decisions necessary to ensure the wellbeing of their students.

If any student is missing required immunizations and/or exemptions as required by RI state law, the School Nurse Teacher will contact the family by mail. Families are to make every effort to keep their child's vaccination status up to date. It also is the state law that a student can be refused entry to school in RI if these vaccination mandates are not met. Communicating with the TAPA School Nurse Teacher will help prevent any disruption in education regarding vaccine issues.

In any emergency or unusual health situation, every effort will be made to contact families. Families are responsible for keeping up-to-date contact information at the school.

### **Confidentiality**

The student's right to privacy and confidentiality of medical information will be preserved to the extent required by law.

# Student Supports at TAPA

## Advisory and House

Caring, compassionate relationships are the cornerstone of any successful community. To meet the unique combination of social, emotional, physical, and intellectual needs of our students, we have implemented an approach designed to keep young people safe, connected, responsible, and engaged in learning. Healthy, enjoyable relationships are the foundation for success in school. In order to establish and maintain those relationships, teachers must know their students; students must come to know and appreciate each other; clear parameters for acceptable behavior must be drawn and consistently maintained; and learning must be engaging, exploratory, relevant, and varied.

A key component of our approach is House and/or Advisory. This time is utilized to develop a bond between Advisor and advisee, as well as to provide structured social assistance and build a community. It is within this setting that data is looked at, and Individualized Learning Plans are drafted. The Advisor/House Leader serves as the student's primary advocate and is the primary communicator between home and school.

## Support Services

TAPA is able to offer services in Special Education, Social Work, English Language Learning Support, Speech/Language Pathology, and Occupational Therapy. Any other services can be planned out with the assistance of the Assistant Head of School. TAPA utilizes a Response to Intervention (RTI) Policy for screening and identification of student needs and services

- Small-class sizes and tutoring are offered to all students, and more intensive supports can be designed by the Assistant Head of School

## TAPA's Approach to Student Activism and Protest Activities

At TAPA we encourage students to be active and informed participants in the world outside our doors; this is essential if we are going to meet the parameters of our mission to prepare students for their role in "a global society." Additionally, we acknowledge our students' expertise in the experience of racism, classism, sexism, ageism, ableism, and homophobia, and we believe that our young artists have a relevant and powerful point of view for social change. To that end, TAPA supports students' First Amendment rights around protest and activism. That said, as a school, TAPA holds student safety to be paramount. The following approach is designed to create avenues for student activism that are both authentic and safe.

We anticipate that students may be active in three distinctive types of protest activities:

1. A Pre-Planned Event: i.e., "*In the near future*, people are assembling for a designated reason, and TAPA students are interested in being involved"
2. A Reactive Event: i.e. "Yesterday, something happened, and people are assembling for a designated reason later on *today*, and TAPA students are interested in being involved."
3. A Spontaneous Event: i.e. "*Right this second*, people are assembling for a designated reason, and TAPA students are interested in being involved."

TAPA will respond in the following ways:

1. A Pre-Planned Event:
  - a. TAPA will work with student activists to gauge interest in the event.

- b. If the event takes place entirely during school hours, no additional permission slips are required for students to participate. If the event takes place in any part outside of school hours, a permission slip will be sent home to notify families.
- c. One (volunteer) TAPA staff member per every 15 Upper School or 10 Lower School students will attend the event with students as a designated observer.
- d. Students will make up any work missed, per the existing policy on excused absences.
- e. Students will attend a debrief with the volunteer staff member after school on the Wednesday following the event.

2. A Reactive Event:

- a. For these events, TAPA will follow the steps outlined for A Pre-Planned Event, above, however: **If a volunteer TAPA staff member isn't available to attend, students will be advised to either: not attend the event, or to attend under the parameters laid out below under "A Spontaneous Event."**

3. A Spontaneous Event:

- a. Due to the spontaneous nature of these events, TAPA is not able to ensure student safety. Therefore, TAPA is not able to facilitate student participation.
- b. While TAPA recommends against students participating in a spontaneous event, we will not prevent it. Namely, while we may request that students not participate, we will not prevent them from participating nor blockade them from leaving the building.
- c. If a student chooses to leave school grounds to participate in one of these events, we encourage them:
  - i. to behave in a manner that is safe and respectful;
  - ii. to maintain communication with the greater TAPA Ensemble;
  - iii. to understand that, while their choice to attend is in violation of school rules, we are deeply invested in their safety and activism.
- d. If a student chooses to leave school grounds to participate in one of these events, they will receive school-based consequences under the existing parameters laid out (below) in this handbook for skipping classes and leaving school grounds:
  - i. Skipping Class is a *Mid-Level Infraction* and the consequence for it is detention.
  - ii. Leaving school grounds is considered a *Major Infraction* and "violations of major school rules may result in severe consequences or disciplinary action, including the possibility of suspensions for a first offense."



# **Teaching and Learning in TAPA’s Lower School (Grades 7 & 8)**

## **The Philosophy of TAPA’s Lower School**

The Lower School is the foundational period for a TAPA student; it is when a seventh and eighth grader transitions from being a student to an artist-scholar. Students spend the two Lower School years at TAPA experiencing all of the arts as well as acclimating to the rigor required for all of their academic classes. Students will experience an arts-integrated curriculum and have constant guidance from their teachers towards developing academic, artistic, and social-emotional skills and resilience. Lower School teachers meet daily to analyze student data and support student learning as a team of warm and demanding teacher-artists. Culminating with the 8th grade arts auditions, a student’s two years in the TAPA Lower School engage them in the process of becoming a TAPA star.

## **Required Lower School Classes**

Math, Math Seminar, Composition, Literature, Ethnic Studies, Science, Exploratory Arts (One quarter each of Theatre, Film, Music, and Dance).

## **Double Blocks of Math and ELA**

In an effort to address any learning gaps incoming TAPA students may have, as well as to have an opportunity to tailor specific enrichment and remediation for all students, TAPA offers two academic blocks of Math and ELA to all students.

In Math, these blocks are back-to-back, and allow instructors to go more in-depth with grade-level Mathematical concepts, while also differentiating instruction to fit all student needs. 8<sup>th</sup> grade students may place into Algebra I rather than Math 8.

In ELA, one block is focused on reading skill development through engagement with a variety of literary and textual formats, with an emphasis on meaning and analysis through evidence and reasoning. Another block focuses on comfort, confidence, and skill in writing ability through practice with grammatical and mechanical characteristics of writing while preparing for both real world and academic writing, as well as state testing expectations.

## **Standardized and STAR Testing**

Students in Grades 7 and 8 will take the RICAS test in English Language Arts and Mathematics. Every two years, 8th graders will take the NAEP Test. 8th graders will take the state’s Next Generation Science Standards Exam. Any English Language Learning students will need to take the ACCESS Test.

STAR Testing is the internal progress monitoring tool given four to five times per year to help students and teachers understand student ability levels, as well as strengths and needs, for Reading and Math.

# Lower School Course Offerings

## Lower School Math

### **Math 7 & Math Seminar I**

Math 7 & Math Seminar I is a full-year double-block course that reinforces and expands students' foundational Math skills, such as arithmetic operations using rational numbers, area, perimeter and volume of geometric figures, congruence and similarity, angle relationships, the rectangular coordinate system, sets and logic, ratio and proportion, estimation, formulas, solving and graphing simple equations and inequalities.

### **Math 8 & Math Seminar II**

Math 8 & Math Seminar II is a full-year double-block course that combines the study of pre-algebra and algebra topics with introductory geometry topics. This course includes the study of formulas, algebraic expressions, first-degree equations, the rectangular coordinate system, area, perimeter, volume of geometric figures, and properties of triangles and circles; including the Pythagorean theorem.

## Lower School English Language Arts

### **Literature and Composition 7**

Students will be introduced to and will deeply explore the concept/theme of “choice” and “consequences actions may have on one’s self” through engaging and informative readings of a variety of formats. Texts will vary from fables and myths to historic accounts. Emphasis will be placed on building reading confidence and skill both independently and through text analyzed as a group. Students will learn to analyze and explain the meaning of texts, supporting them with evidence and reasoning by participating in class discussions. They will also broaden their vocabulary to be utilized in other classes.

Students will study the structures of academic writing, specifically informational, persuasive, and narrative essays. Students will utilize the vocabulary learned in Literature I in their writing pieces to show comprehension of grade-level content vocabulary. Students will learn conventions in grammar, and how to present their compositions in a professional manner. Students will demonstrate comprehension through composition, multiple-choice, and TEQ (Technology Enhanced Questions) as seen on RICAS. Students will use the arts to respond to texts read in Literature class to practice the performance and artistic skills taught in Arts classes.

### **Literature & Composition 8**

Students will more deeply analyze and explore the concept/theme of decisions and consequences through a variety of different texts and literary formats. Text will vary from utopian/dystopian novels and heroes' journeys to Shakespearean comedies. We will once again focus on building students' reading confidence and skill through text and individual study. Students will learn to analyze and explain the meaning of texts, supporting them with evidence and reasoning by participating in class discussions. They will also broaden their vocabulary to be utilized in other classes.

Students will more deeply study the structures of informational, persuasive, and narrative essays, as well as receive instruction on creating a resume and cover letter. Students will utilize the vocabulary learned in Literature II in their writing pieces to show comprehension of grade-level content vocabulary. Students will learn conventions in grammar, and how to present their compositions in a professional

manner. Students will demonstrate comprehension through composition, multiple-choice, and TEQ (Technology Enhanced Questions) as seen on RICAS. Students will use the arts to respond to texts read in Literature class to practice the performance and artistic skills taught in Arts classes.

## **Lower School Ethnic Studies**

### **Ethnic Studies I**

In the 7th grade ethnic studies classes students will explore the intersection of the identities of race, class, and gender for themselves, society at large, and major historical narratives. The 7th grade focuses on the macro-narrative from pre-Columbian contact to early anti-imperialism. Students will also begin to explore the foundations of research, citation, and informational formal writing skills.

### **Ethnic Studies II**

In the 8th grade ethnic studies classes students will utilize their knowledge of intersectional analysis to both research and interrogate the narratives of modern history. The 8th grade focuses on developing students' abilities to analyze where their personal narratives fit into the macro-narratives of the modern world. Students will develop their skills in formal writing, research-based presentation, and personal historical research.

## **Lower School Science**

### **Science 7**

In 7th grade, students are exposed to a wide scope of sciences aiming to give a base set of knowledge to be expanded in the Upper School. Students start the year learning how to utilize scientific measurement tools and how to design an effective experiment. We touch on biology, physics, and chemistry throughout the rest of the year.

### **Science 8**

In 8th grade, students go a little deeper into a wide scope of sciences aiming to give an established base set of knowledge to be expanded in the Upper School. Students start the year learning how to apply scientific measurement tools to their surroundings and how to design effective experiments. We expand on biology, physics, and chemistry throughout the rest of the year.

## **Lower School Exploratory Arts**

### **Exploratory Arts 7**

Upon entering the 7th grade arts program, students begin an exploration of all four performing art forms through multiple class rotations. The purpose of these rotations is to immerse students into the wealth of art variety; allowing them to experience and appreciate each art on their path to declaring an art major at the end of their 8th grade year.

- Quarter One consists of four 10-day rotations with each art form (Dance, Film, Music, and Theatre). During this time students are introduced to the Arts Team through community-building art activities, art lessons, and an overview of their first year in the arts.
- Quarters Two and Three consist of four five-week rotations with each art form. During these longer rotations, students have the opportunity to dive deeper into each art class. Each teaching artist follows an individualized curriculum; all art classes explore the fundamentals of art-making, respect for each other within an artistic setting, and self-expression through the arts.
- Quarter Four is one uninterrupted 10-week course in the art form of their choice. All 7th grade students must submit a written proposal advocating for their preferred art placement in Quarter

four that will be reviewed and approved by the Lower School and Artistic Team. During the pre-major quarter they will participate alongside the 8th grade students to experience audition preparation; to “try on” that art for size.

### **Exploratory Arts 8**

Upon entering the 8th grade arts program, students continue an exploration of all four performing art forms through multiple class rotations. The purpose of these rotations is to immerse students into the wealth of art variety; allowing them to experience and appreciate each art on their path to declaring an art major at the end of their 8th grade year.

- Quarter One consists of four 10-day rotations with each art form (Dance, Film, Music, and Theatre). During this time students are reintroduced to the Arts Team through community building art activities, art lessons, and an overview of their second year in the arts.
- Quarters Two and Three consist of four five-week rotations with each art form. During these longer rotations, students have the opportunity to dive deeper into each art class. Each teaching artist follows an individualized curriculum; all art classes explore the fundamentals of art-making, respect for each other within an artistic setting, and self-expression through the arts.
- Quarter Four is one uninterrupted 10-week course in the art form of their choice. All 8th grade students must submit a written proposal advocating for their preferred art major placement for high school that will be reviewed and approved by the Lower School and Artistic Team. In addition, they will have previously been interviewed individually by a member of the admin team to ensure they are in the appropriate art pre-major. During the pre-major quarter, they will experience audition preparation, creating independent art, rehearsal, revision, and building interview skills. All of this will culminate in their end-of-year Art Major Auditions, which will be performed for the entire school and an invited panel of judges.

## **Teaching and Learning in TAPA’s Upper School (Grades 9-12)**

### **The Philosophy of TAPA’s Upper School**

TAPA’s Upper School strives to prepare students for postsecondary success through a program that nurtures the development of individuals within a vibrant and supportive community of learners. TAPA provides a rigorous academic and arts-integrated curriculum focused on the development of independent, critical thinkers and involved citizens.

TAPA uses the Common Core Standards, Next Generation Science Standards, and other national standards, as well as the concepts introduced in Developmental Designs, as the basis for our work. We empower students to take responsibility for their own learning, to take leadership roles in the classroom and community, and to change their own behavior as they grow, and we support them in learning the skills necessary to do so.

### **Required Upper School Classes**

Freshman Year: At least one block of Math (most required to take two), at least one block of English Language Arts (most required to take two), Historical Perspectives, Science, Arts Major.

In an effort to address any gaps incoming TAPA students may have, as well as to have an opportunity to tailor specific enrichment and remediation for all students, TAPA offers two academic blocks of Math and ELA to all students.

In Math, instructors utilize the double-block to go more in-depth with grade-level Mathematical concepts, and also differentiating instruction to fit all student needs. Oftentimes, this allows a student to see two different Math instructors, and thus learn multiple ways to approach different issues in Math.

In ELA, one ELA block is dedicated to grade-level content, while another block allows enrichment and remediation opportunities, and places a heavy emphasis on PSAT and other testing preparation.

10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> grade years: Math, English Language Arts, Arts Major, Arts Practicum. Students must also take at least three years of Historical Perspectives and Science, and two years of a World Language. Additionally, participation in an Arts Major is mandatory. The Rhode Island Department of Education allows all districts or Charter Schools to add additional requirements for high school graduation. Students at TAPA must complete a program of study in one of the four performing Arts offered at the school: Dance, Film, Music, and Theatre. Students in grades 10-12 are given a second block in their Arts Major on a daily basis to ensure mastery prior to graduation.

## **The Arts Majors: Career and Technical Education at TAPA**

Upon enrollment at TAPA and/or the end of 8th grade (whichever comes later) TAPA students apply for acceptance into one of four Arts Majors: Dance, Film, Music, or Theatre. These are mandatory Career and Technical Education (CTE) Pathways, i.e. - a sequence of two or more CTE courses that include coherent and rigorous content aligned with challenging academic standards and relevant career and technical content within a student's area of arts interest. Within these pathways, content is delivered in a coordinated, non-duplicative progression of courses that aligns a student's TAPA education with their postsecondary education and career plans. All 10th-12th grade Arts Major (CTE) classes are sequential and required. They must be taken in order, at a rate of one per year, and at TAPA, except in the case of rare exceptions granted by the Guidance Counselor and TAPA Administration.

## **College Preparation at TAPA**

TAPA prepares all artist-scholars for postsecondary success. At the Lower School level, early awareness of the importance to the college process of grades, extracurricular involvement, the arts, and responsible behavior is built through class presentations. Lower School teachers and Advisors aim to engage our youngest TAPA students in school through building close relationships, the arts, and community-building activities. This creates the foundation for the Upper School college preparation curriculum.

Additionally, all TAPA students (grades 7-12) acquire professional behavior and skills necessary to succeed in college and the workplace, including:

- Practice in self-advocacy: being present at parent-teacher conferences, teacher/guidance meetings, writing requests for help, etc.
- Regularly checking and responding to email professionally.
- Dressing professionally.
- Setting appointments with the Guidance Counselor to discuss any issue (including social, schedule change, or other minor issues) via email, as opposed to popping in (as is required at the college level).
- Using Google Calendar to set appointments.
- Accountability in terms of keeping appointments.

- Actively reflecting on ways to improve in school (Google Surveys that inspire self-reflection, class reflections, creating plans to attend afterschool tutoring, contacting teachers for extra help)
- Regularly meeting with individuals from local organizations or other schools - i.e. giving tours or visiting other institutions, in such a way that professional presentation is required.
- Discussing conflict with peers and teachers in a healthy manner (guided by School Social Worker, Guidance Counselor, Dean of Students, and teachers).

In the Upper School, students in grades 10-12 participate in a rigorous college preparatory curriculum that involves in-depth presentations and activities on various college topics. These include, but are not limited to:

### *10th Grade*

- Grade Point Average (GPA) calculation presentations in class
- Transcripts - examining what colleges are looking for
- Instruction in writing and responding to emails professionally
- Building a strong resume of extracurricular activities
- PSAT Preparation and regular guidance presentations - Khan Academy, contests, etc.
- PSAT-related incentives, rewards, and recognition
- Basics of the college application process
- Basics of financial aid and scholarships
- Reinforcement of the belief that college IS accessible, possible, and affordable with the right preparation
- Discussion of various career pathways, including but not limited to The Arts
- Taking the PSAT twice in the fall and spring with extensive preparation and support
- Spring: application process for Dual Enrollment (college classes) and Advanced Course Network classes in junior year
- Many 10th graders take Advance Course Network classes as early as sophomore year

### *11th Grade*

- Updated Grade Point Average (GPA) calculation presentations in class
- In-depth review of transcripts - examining where improvement is needed
- Instruction in writing and responding to emails professionally
- Instruction in booking, remembering, and reporting early for appointments using Google Calendar
- Building a strong resume of extracurricular activities
- SAT Preparation becomes an in-depth component of the ELA and Math curriculum
- College search on College Board, creating a college list
- In-depth discussion of financial aid and scholarships
- Saving money for college; job search in full swing
- Applying to College Visions and other college support programs
- Multiple students participate in Dual Enrollment and Advanced Course Network
- Spring: the application process for Dual Enrollment and Advanced Course Network
- Taking the PSAT in the fall and official SAT in the spring with extensive preparation and support

### *12th Grade*

- Detailed weekly curriculum (class instruction by Guidance Counselor) with graded weekly assignments

- Creation of a college list that includes safety, target, and reaches schools
- In-depth discussion of financial safety schools and their importance
- Completion of the Common Application: all sections
- Requesting letters of recommendation early and professionally
- Scheduling appointments to fill out FAFSA at the college planning center
- Tracking of FAFSA completion
- Four one-on-one, hour-long appointments in preparation for final submission
- Individual, full-day appointments to submit final applications
- Scholarships
- College costs and avoiding significant debt
- Success strategies for college -- academic, emotional, social, financial
- Importance of college support programs for first-generation students
- Assistance with final decision-making regarding which college to attend
- Guidance on the first steps towards enrolling: orientation, deposits, bills
- A strong expectation of professional emailing, booking, and reporting early to set meetings using Google Calendar, and professional interactions with college recommenders
- Completion of the College Essay in ELA class for the final Quarter one grade
- Targeted SAT preparation for November test in ELA and Math classes
- Over half of the senior class participates in the Dual Enrollment program (college classes) with guided support for one full TAPA class block per day
- Full-length guided practice SAT in November with graded self-assessment reflection
- Updated Grade Point Average (GPA) calculation
- In-depth review of transcripts -- where improvement is needed
- Extensive communication between Guidance Counselor and families regarding
  - College application process
  - Financial aid appointments -- where to go, what to bring
  - The students' academic, emotional, and college-related progress
  - Review of financial aid packages
  - Guidance regarding final decision-making on which school to attend
  - Guidance on the first steps towards enrolling: orientation, deposits, bills

### *Post-Graduation*

The majority of TAPA graduates are first-generation college students, and thus benefit from continued support and contact once enrolled. TAPA employs such strategies as:

- Regular check-ins via email, text, and messenger with Guidance Counselor, former Advisors, and former teachers/administrators
- Providing emergency financial support when possible (we hope to grow this via an Alumni Emergency Fund)
- Continuing guidance related to course selection, major, housing, and finances (Guidance Counselor, in partnership with College Visions)
- Alumni presentations - members of the class of 2016 and 2017 frequently visit TAPA to share their experiences and offer advice to current 11th grade students and 12th grade students.

## **STAR and Standardized Testing**

All TAPA students take the PSAT and SAT multiple times as part of our college preparation program. The SAT is the most widely recognized college entrance exam and a state assessment. All students take the PSAT, a grade-appropriate preparation exam, three times: 1) Fall of 10th grade, 2) Spring of 10th

grade, and 3) Fall of 11th grade. Students take the SAT at least twice: 1) Spring of 11th grade, and 2) Fall of 12th grade. TAPA provides rigorous preparation within the curriculum and through external preparation programs.

Every year, 11<sup>th</sup> grade students take the state's Next Generation Science Standards Exam. Any English Language Learning students will need to take the ACCESS Test. Every two years, 11th graders take the NAEP Test.

STAR is the internal progress monitoring tool given 4-5 times per year to help students and teachers understand student ability levels, as well as strengths and needs, for Reading, Math, and Spanish.

## Upper School Course Offerings

### The Performing Arts at TAPA

The Performing Arts Department at TAPA strives to support and strengthen the individual artist inside each student while simultaneously cultivating a safe community for creating meaningful art. Our program consists of four performing art departments; Dance, Film, Music, and Theatre. We strive to encourage students to find their unique artistic voice within and beyond the walls of our school community. Course instruction allows students to explore a variety of facets within their art major while focusing on a common artistic foundation including; stamina, rigor, critical thinking, confidence, and professionalism. All students must complete four years of art credits, totaling seven credits (four arts major and three arts practicum) by graduation. Over the course of these four years, students are encouraged to participate in the myriad of afterschool art activities offered to advance their artistic mastery. Using artistic mediums that excite and challenge our students we explore academics, the world around us, and ourselves through an artistic lens that fosters students to achieve personal success and empowerment past graduation.

## The Film Major

The Film Department at TAPA is an independent motion picture production house. Film Majors work with a wide range of professional cameras and editing software. They build a high level of technological and artistic skills through creating a robust portfolio of short film projects from development and pre-production through production and post-production. Filmmaking fundamentals, media literacy, history, and the future of time-based media are explored in relation to each level of education in the Film Major program. Additionally, Film Majors are guided through real-world filmmaking opportunities as cinematographers, directors, producers, and artists in the field.

### Film I

Introduction to Film and Video exposes students to the evolution of film and television history in relation to technical and artistic advancements. Students learn the foundations of live-action filmmaking, including 180-degree rule, essential cuts and transitions, lighting for mood, and point of view. Additionally, students are pushed to increase their technical abilities as camera operators, production assistants, and video editors.

### Film II

Sound in Film introduces students to the history and relevance of Foley sound, diegesis, and music video production. Students learn more advanced features in the Final Cut video editing software such as effect parameters and keyframing, along with visual concepts in composition, movement, and context.



### **Film III**

Documentary Filmmaking explores media literacy, modes of documentary, and advanced video production techniques on set and in the field. Students learn how to edit using the advanced video editing software - Adobe Premiere Pro, as well as, graphic design techniques using Adobe Photoshop.

### **Film IV**

Motion Picture Production provides senior Film Majors the opportunity to independently discover their artistic concentration and direction in completing portfolio material and a final thesis film production. Students refine their technical abilities as camera operators and video editors to suit their creative visions. Additionally, students are exposed to strategies in film budgeting, location scouting, producing, freelancing, and identifying career paths in the motion picture industries.

### **Film Practicum I and II**

An extension of the Film Major curriculum, Film Practicum offers students an opportunity to deepen their knowledge of composition, colorimetry, graphic design, and visual art. Additionally, students are encouraged to utilize the film lab for specialized studio productions, full production crew collaborations, and arts integration.

### **Film Minor I**

Introduction to Film and Video exposes students to film and television history in relation to technical and artistic advancements. Students learn the foundations of live-action filmmaking, including 180-degree rule, essential cuts and transitions, lighting for mood, and point of view. Additionally, students are pushed to increase their technical abilities as camera operators, production assistants, and video editors.

### **Film Minor II**

Stop-Motion teaches students advanced animation techniques incorporating pixilation, green screen, and basic 2D computer animation techniques. Students are exposed to contemporary stop-motion animations and encouraged to experiment with challenging techniques.

### **Film Minor III**

Intro to Adobe Photoshop teaches the basics of graphic design through a variety of digital visual art projects. Students learn how to manipulate multiple layers, design titles, incorporate photography, and develop branding/logos/poster concepts.

## **The Dance Major**

The Dance Program at Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts supports students to expand their movement vocabulary while also developing the skills to be innovators and creators of dance. Using the National Core Arts Standards in Dance, the TAPA dance company works to re-center dance education around Afro-Latin dance traditions, as well as learning, performing, creating, and teaching choreography that pushes these boundaries. Our traditions exist. Our traditions belong. Our imaginations exist. Our imaginations belong. *TAPA's dance company is a Multicultural Anti-Oppression community.*

### **Dance I: Introduction to Dance Culture**

9th Grade Dance Majors will focus on finding our culture as a dance company. How does a dance company prepare for a performance? How does a dance company train to build new skills? How does a dance company support one another? What is the difference between a technique class and a rehearsal?

### **Dance II: Introduction to Composition and Technique**

10th Grade Dance Majors will begin exploring the foundations of Dance Composition and Technique. How do we create original movement for an ensemble? What are techniques to improvise and create movement? What does our dance company need to refine our rehearsal process? What questions and ideas do we want to explore through our movement practice? What are we passionate about?

### **Dance III: Intermediate Composition and Technique**

11th Grade Dance Majors will continue exploring the foundations of Dance Composition and Technique. What is the difference between creating a movement for a group and for an individual? As artists, what is our social responsibility toward our audience? Toward each other? How can our process and product embody social justice? How can we bring organization and structure to our creative process so that we can teach choreography to others?

### **Dance IV: Senior Thesis Composition and Performance Art**

12th Grade Dance Majors are treated as a professional dance company. Each dancer will find their voice as a performance artist. 12th Grade Dance Majors have the option to work as a soloist for the entire year or for a portion of the year; and they may also choose to work collaboratively with other 12th grade students, with dancers and alumni in the community, or as a mentor/teaching assistant with younger students.

### **Dance Practicum I and II: Studio and Teaching Artistry**

Dance Majors take three years of “Dance Practicum” (10th, 11th, and 12th grade) in order to practice the skills and attitudes that are expected in a professional studio environment. Whereas morning dance classes are collaborative in the creative process, a studio environment requires a different type of preparation.

### **Dance Minor Electives I, II, and III**

During Quarter 3, 9th, 10th, and 11th grade artists from all majors at TAPA have the option to take an elective in the Dance Department. This elective will vary from year to year, often with an interdisciplinary focus, at the discretion of the Artist in Residence and Adjunct Choreographer in Residence. Some examples of past elective options include: Gender and Art, Traditional African Dance and Culture, Intermediate Latin Ballroom, Fitness, Yoga, and Meditation, Choreographing Musical Theatre.

## **The Music Major**

The TAPA Music Program offers a wide array of musical experiences and opportunities with a focus on individual skill building, group collaboration, and community performances. In Lower School (7th - 8th grade), students receive an introduction to music performance using keyboards, drums, xylophones, voices, and guitars. In Upper School (9th - 12th grade) Music Majors focus on theory, history, composition, improvisation, songwriting, ear training, performance, and general musicianship. Arts Practicum provides an opportunity for students to take private instrument lessons and develop their instrumental or vocal skills. Students may also enroll in the following afterschool ensembles: Chorus, Percussion Ensemble, Brass Band, MARS Camp (Songwriting + Recording).

### **Music I: Introduction to the Study of Music and Performance**

Introduction to the Study of Music and Performance focuses on music appreciation, musicianship, theory, and culture. In this course, students learn how to study and critically listen to music. We learn the basics of vocal and keyboard techniques. Students explore ways in which people use music around the world to end conflict and build peace. Students learn the proper vocabulary for talking about music and study major scales, rhythmic notation, time signature, meter, dynamics, and tempo. We begin to explore harmony and chord progressions. Students will learn about musical form and consider the relationship between music and the society/time period in which it was created. This course includes an introduction to songwriting.

### **Music II: Musicianship, Skill Building, and Musical Identity**

Musicianship, Skill Building, and Musical Identity is a course for 10<sup>th</sup> Grade Music Majors designed to improve musicianship, instrument skills, and understanding of music theory and history. We start with listening skills and focus on developing independent practice skills. For music theory, students explore scales, chords, and rhythms. Our segment on music history and culture traces the roots of African American music from early blues to modern genres and focuses on ways that musicians use song to fight injustice. Students learn the blues form and write their own songs. Students begin to develop a concentration within the Music Major and start to look ahead toward their Junior (11<sup>th</sup> grade) Recitals.

### **Music III: Intermediate Theory, History and Performance**

Intermediate Theory, History, and Performance is a deeper exploration into ear training, more challenging music theory, and Western Art Music, designed for more experienced musicians. Ear training focuses on major and minor intervals and voice training focuses on three-part harmony. For music appreciation, we use the PRONK! festival as a case study for how local musicians use arts for social activism and community building. For music theory, we explore harmony, including triads and seventh chords. By the end of the course, students have strong skills for analyzing and transposing chord progressions. For history and culture, we explore the roots and development of Jazz. In order to graduate from this course, students are required to perform at a Junior (11<sup>th</sup> grade) Recital.

### **Music IV: Senior Thesis Project - Advanced Performance, Analysis, and Composition**

12<sup>th</sup> grade music focuses on advanced musicianship, theory, composition with a focus on developing and refining one's musical identity. Students will synthesize skills developed over the past four years to design senior projects that include performance as well as professional music industry life skills. This project includes an in-depth analysis of the artists and songs that have shaped them as musicians and people and has a heavy emphasis on songwriting and musical production. The course culminates in Senior Thesis Performances prepared, organized, arranged, promoted, and run by students.

### **Music Practicum I + II: Private Lessons, Individual Skills, and Recital Prep**

Arts Practicum in Music is a period for Music Majors (grades 10-12) to practice and develop individual skills on their main instruments. Students receive private or small group lessons on piano, guitar, bass, drums, voice, brass/reeds, or violin/viola and prepare for in-school or public recitals throughout the year. Outside of lessons, students may work on songs or instrument skills independently, in small groups or rehearse ensemble pieces for upcoming performances.

### **Music Minor I: General Music**

This course is an introduction to the study of music for non-Music Majors. We focus on listening skills, music appreciation, instrument skills, and the building blocks of music: melody, rhythm, and harmony. Students study different genres of music and perform solo and group pieces.

### **Music Minor II: Jazz Band**

This is the course for Jazz, Blues, and R&B lovers. We learn about the history of Blues and Jazz, listen to different styles including Swing, Bebop, Latin Jazz, Bossa Nova, Jazz Hip Hop and then form a band and learn Jazz standards. Students compose and perform original Blues songs. We also study the basics of improvisation and practice taking solos using major and minor pentatonic scales over Jazz chord progressions.

### **Music Minor III: Music + Protest**

In Music + Protest, we listen to music, watch videos and explore examples throughout history and our modern world in which musicians have used their art to fight injustice/oppression and build peace. We consider the social justice issues facing our communities today and create music with important messages to be performed at public rallies and events.

## **The Theatre Major**

The Theatre program at TAPA is designed to teach, train and inspire youth with the history, theory, and practice of the art of play. The program teaches both theatrical education and real-world application of the art and pushes the students to use theatre as an outlet to express themselves and gain skills, professionalism, and confidence. The goal of this department is to educate, inspire and assist in our students' path to success.

### **Theatre I: Introduction to Acting**

This course is designed to build and strengthen a foundation of acting through the study and practice of the basics of stage performance as well as looking at the beginnings of theatre during the Greek period. The class will study the instrument of the voice and the body, analysis of a character, and performance on the stage. This will transition to a study of Improvisational Theatre to help understand relationships and being present in performance.

### **Theatre II: Classical Theatre**

This course builds on Introduction to Acting by moving from Improvisational Theatre to Commedia dell'arte. Students will learn about stock characters, scenarios, lazzis, and relationships. From there, students will move to the works of Shakespeare, both studying and performing his work. Finally, students will move onto musical theatre where the focus will be on performing through song and dance.

### **Theatre III: Modern Theatre**

This course is focused on the world of theatre from the 1890s to today. Studies will range from international influences, modern American plays, melodramas, comedies, farces, experimental and avant-garde. There will also be a focus on the influences of the civil rights movement and the skills of public speaking. This course will finish up with stage combat and resume building.

### **Theatre IV: Script to Stage**

This course utilizes all of the previously taken courses as well as an element of arts integration and applies them to the skills of script writing, casting, directing, designing, constructing, and producing a short play at the end of the year. This project and all of its subsequent work will then be compiled into a

thesis document and presented to a panel of judges where the students will need to defend their piece of artwork.

### **Practicum I and II: Technical Theatre**

Practicum I and II for Theatre focuses on technical theatre skills and their application to stage performance. Students are exposed to stage management, costuming, sets, props, sound, and lighting. Class instruction prepares students to become technical crew members for art performances throughout the school year. Advanced levels of Practicum explore alternative theatre performance using technical theatre elements to bring original stories to the stage. Under this lens, students investigate conceptual design to strengthen their collaboration and performance skills.

### **Theatre Minor I: Introduction to Acting**

This course is designed to build and strengthen a foundation of acting through the study and practice of the basics of stage performance as well as looking at the beginnings of theatre during the Greek period. The class will study the instrument of the voice and the body, analysis of a character, and performance on the stage.

### **Theatre Minor II: Classical Theatre**

This course starts with Commedia dell'arte. Students will learn about stock characters, scenarios, lazzi, and relationships. From there, students will move to the works of Shakespeare, both studying and performing his work.

### **Theatre Minor III: Modern Theatre**

This course is focused on the world of theatre from the 1890s to today. Studies will range from international influences, modern American plays, melodramas, comedies, farces, experimental, and avant-garde.

## **English Language Arts**

The ELA department at TAPA is committed to developing and enhancing our students' ability to think critically and express themselves effectively as citizens, artists, and users of language. Developing confidence, stamina, skill, and interest as readers through the analysis of classic and contemporary literature as well as literary non-fiction serves as a context for students' development as critical thinkers and writers with their own creative voice. All students must complete four years of Literature and Composition classes, as well as an original thesis that bridges ELA and their arts major. Close textual reading, process writing, and critical thinking skills drive the curriculum. Integration of content and skills from the arts majors through expressive, research, and analytical writing is used to deepen understanding of self and agency in the world.

### **ELA Seminar (Lit) and ELA Seminar (Comp)**

These two half-year courses are offered as a bridge program between the Lower and Upper School and are focused on building, expanding, and bridging component skills in reading, writing, test-taking, analysis, and expression as students transition into Upper School expectations.

### **Literature and Composition I**

TAPA's Literature and Composition I course is focused on the study of literary texts, grammar components, vocabulary, and other related skills. Literature studied includes a variety of plays, novels, non-fiction essays, short stories, and poems. The overall theme of the content is "Coming of Age."

Additionally, students identify and transfer test-taking skills from RICAS preparation and learn to apply them to the PSATs, while also strengthening grammar, mechanics, and stylistic writing skills. A blended and personalized learning approach utilizes tools like Quill.org and Khan Academy through the Google Classroom to develop sentence-level writing strength which is then applied in individual arts-based writing assignments.

### **Literature and Composition II**

Provides a basic overview of a variety of literature types, incorporating reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. Preparation for PSATs, which students take for the first time in October and again in April, is a focus. Students are also required to read supplemental texts, maintain a class journal, work in groups, and compile a writing portfolio. The overall theme of the content is “Defining Culture”.

### **Literature and Composition III**

Literature, literary nonfiction, research, and art are used to define, explore, critique, and re-envision the “American Dream”. The development and application of analytical skills is strongly emphasized through the close reading of poetry, essays, and articles, the analysis of persuasive nonfiction articles, and the writing of timed analytical essays (the SAT Essay) and applied research essays (the Arts Major Research Paper).

### **Literature and Composition IV**

Centered around Critical Perspectives, students analyze philosophical, artistic, informational, and literary works to develop multiple lenses through which to interpret the world and define their role in it as artists and individuals. The writing process is heavily emphasized through reflective narrative writing (the “College Essay”) and applied research writing (the “Senior Arts Thesis”).

## **Mathematics**

The Math Department at TAPA is committed to helping students achieve their greatest potential in Mathematics while pursuing courses that meet their individual needs. TAPA offers a variety of pathways to provide Artist-Scholars a four-year Math experience that includes both enrichment options (12th grade College Dual-Enrollment) as well as remediation (9th Grade Pre-Algebra). All TAPA Math courses allow students to investigate Math concepts through the arts, and vice versa, as a means toward deeper understanding and retention of skills needed for post-secondary Math courses and adulthood.

### **Math Seminar**

Math Seminar is a full-year course for 9th graders that focuses instruction and practice on individual student learning goals for Math. The course is designed to support student growth in any Math strand from previous courses where STAR testing shows a weakness for the student. Coursework emphasizes practice and can be either remedial or advanced, depending on the student’s need.

### **Pre-Algebra**

This course reflects topics from the middle grades and Algebra I Common Core State Standards for college and career readiness, and it is designed for the ninth-grader who has passed 8th Grade but needs additional Math skills before taking Algebra 1. Pre-Algebra focuses on several Mathematical concepts: Number Sense and Operations; Variables and Expressions, Equations and Inequalities, Beginning Linear Functions, and Linear Systems of Equations. Students will improve computational skills while applying understanding to real-world problems.

## **Algebra I**

In Algebra I, students build upon, process, and apply fundamental skills of Mathematics, as aligned to the Rhode Island Mathematics Common Core Standards. All students will make connections between algebraic relationships through investigation, discovery, and technology. Content covered will include, but not be limited to: real numbers; solving problems using expressions, equations, inequalities, ratios, and proportions; linear functions and function notation; solving systems of equations and inequalities; rational functions; radical functions; operations with exponents; and graphing.

## **Algebra II**

This course provides a review and extension of Algebra I concepts, as aligned to the Rhode Island Mathematics Common Core Standards. Students will expand their knowledge of equations and inequalities of linear functions, explore other types of functions, and develop advanced algebra skills in patterns and functions; systems of equations and inequalities; quadratic functions and equations; complex numbers; parent graphs; polynomial functions; probability; and statistics. Learning strategies, critical thinking skills, problem-solving techniques, and the use of Math technology are emphasized to prepare students for future Math courses.

## **Geometry**

This course focuses on the Common Core State Standards for college and career readiness in Geometry, including identifying points, lines, and planes; measuring and classifying angles, congruent angles, and angle bisectors; writing algebraic and geometric proofs; identifying and applying relationships between parallel lines and transversals; identifying and applying triangle congruence and similarity, and incorporating trigonometry in real-world contexts.

## **Advanced Algebra and Trigonometry**

Advanced Algebra and Trigonometry is a full-year blended course that focuses on the study of both Advanced Algebra topics with the integration of Trigonometry. This course focuses on several areas of the Algebra and Geometry Strands of Mathematics: Systems of Equations and Inequalities, Polynomials, Quadratic Functions and Inequalities, Polynomial Functions and Sequences and Series. Problem-solving, technology, and construction will be integral to every lesson. Connections will be made to other academic and arts disciplines, to the world we live in, and to a variety of Mathematical approaches. This course is designed to prepare students for college placement exams and complex SAT and ACT Mathematical questions. Prerequisites: Successful completion of Algebra II at TAPA or a rigorous Algebra II program with a supporting transcript and/or teacher recommendation.

## **Pre-Calculus**

This course combines the study of Trigonometry, Elementary Functions, Analytic Geometry, and Mathematical Analysis topics as preparation for calculus. Topics typically include the study of complex numbers; polynomial, logarithmic, exponential, rational, right trigonometric, and circular functions, and their relations, inverses, and graphs; trigonometric identities and equations; solutions of right and oblique triangles; vectors; the polar coordinate system; conic sections; Boolean algebra and symbolic logic; Mathematical induction; matrix algebra; sequences and series; and limits and continuity.

## **Consumer Economics / Personal Finance**

This course provides students with an understanding of the concepts and principles involved in managing one's personal finances. It emphasizes lifespan goal-setting, individual and family decision-making, and consumer rights. The course additionally covers topics that are commonly associated with personal finance so that one can become a financially responsible consumer. Topics may

include paying for college, financial aid/loans, savings and investing, credit, insurance, taxes, and social security, spending patterns and budget planning, contracts, and consumer protection. The course may also investigate the effects of the global economy on consumers and the family.

## **Science**

The mission of the Science Department at TAPA is to develop students to be observers, information-seekers, and problem-solvers who are equipped to cope in an increasingly complex scientific world. Students are actively engaged in thinking processes which include: observation, communication, comparison, organization, relationships, inferences, and application. The program has been designed to interest and challenge all students, whether they will apply science literacy to everyday life as members of society or will enter the science profession as active participants.

### **Computer Science**

This 9th grade course, in conjunction with the CS4RI state initiative and the code.org program at the University of Rhode Island, introduces computer programming in an engaging, fun, creative way *and* provides the computational thinking skills of programming, algorithm development, simulation, and data analysis that can be used in other classes, such as NGSS science classes. Students are introduced to the full Google programming suite, as well as other coding programs, such as Python.

### **Biology**

In 10th grade, students explore the living world. From cells to ecology, students will explore how organisms interact with each other and the world around them. Through hands-on experiments (and dissections!) students develop a better understanding of the mechanisms that make life work.

### **Chemistry**

In 11th grade, students focus on the molecular world. Identifying properties of matter and atomic structures will provide a basis for studying electrons. The periodic table will help students with how molecules bond and react with each other.

### **Ethical Issues in Science**

This is a Science elective for 12th grade students. In this class, students study the fundamentals of moral reasoning in our society. We will focus on the basic conceptual tools for ethical decision-making and how to recognize situations that call for ethical decision-making. We will also discuss issues that our society faces and how we can analyze issues in ways that heighten understanding. A major component of the quarterly grades is an end-of-quarter paper that involves everything we have learned in that quarter.

### **Advanced Placement Biology**

Adhering to the curricula recommended by the College Board and designed to parallel college-level introductory biology courses, AP Biology courses emphasize four general concepts: evolution; cellular processes (energy and communication); genetics and information transfer; and interactions of biological systems. For each concept, these courses emphasize the development of scientific inquiry and reasoning skills, such as designing a plan for collecting data, analyzing data, applying Mathematical routines, and connecting concepts in and across domains. AP Biology courses include college-level laboratory investigations.



## Historical Perspectives

The Historical Perspectives Department provides students with a deep appreciation of the world. This is accomplished by examining different peoples and different areas of the world, from early civilization to the present day. The curriculum requires students to use their creativity, skills, and abilities to go beyond the facts presented and to ask questions and look for answers that will provide them with a real understanding of the material.

The Historical Perspectives curriculum requires the following elements each semester:

- Generating a variety of writing pieces, including, but not limited to: reading responses, research papers, reflective essays, persuasive essays, and informational essays.
- Increase content-specific vocabulary, through the use of various readings, text, and classroom instruction.
- The examination of different historical events using primary and secondary sources.
- Through the study of these sources, students will master specific skill sets such as: listening, reading and producing a written response, reading informational text, comparing/contrasting two authors' views of the same subject, interpreting history through a critical lens, and factually defending their critique.
- Major and minor projects to demonstrate the students' understanding of the material and concepts. These projects will allow the students to demonstrate their creativity and abilities within the framework of the course material.

### **The Age of Nations (Western Civilization)**

This course continues the students' journey through world history, from a Western perspective. The course looks at the political systems of Europe starting with the monarchs and how their rise to power led to events such as the French Revolution and the English Civil War. Students will then connect how this led to Europe growing into powerful nation-states. From here students will examine how this growth led to the First World War. Using the information they have gained through the study of WWI, students will apply these concepts to the rise of dictators in Europe. Lastly, the causes and effects of the Second World War will be studied and how this connects to the start of the Cold War.

### **Europe in the Age of the Cold World (Contemporary World Issues)**

The Cold War shaped the lives of people across the globe. The bipolar world that the superpowers imposed reached every part of society. While we think of the Cold War as a historical narrative shaped by military actions, backroom foreign policy, and spy games, that was not how most people experienced it at the time. This course will focus on exploring the macro-narratives of the Cold War through the contemporary experiences of art and culture. Using popular culture, artistic movements, and vignettes of artists from around the world, the class explores the intersections of politics, foreign affairs, economics, and art. The course starts with the historical narrative in the final years of World War II and ends with the fall of the USSR in 1991. This course will build students' historical analytical skills, artistic criticism, and media literacy.

### **American Experience I (Early U.S. History)**

This course is the start of the students' journey through United States History, through the lens of legal structures. Students will prove how the actions of the British Crown led to rebellion and then revolution. After examining the causes and effects of the American Revolution, students will spend time analyzing the problems the new American nation faced and how this eventually led to the creation of the Constitution. After a deep examination of the Constitution, students will investigate such topics as

Westward Expansion and the differences between the North and the South. This course ends with a study of the causes and effects of the Civil War.

### **American Experience II (Modern U.S. History)**

This course will complete the students' journey through Historical Perspectives, requiring them to use the knowledge and skills they have acquired in their previous courses to analyze and examine the social, political, economic, and cultural effects on the United States through the lens of social movements such as Reconstruction after the Civil War, the Civil Rights movement, the two World Wars, the Cold War and beyond.

## **Spanish Language and Culture**

All Spanish courses at TAPA are experiential communicative classes, with an overarching goal to use the Spanish language and culture to explore ourselves and the world around us. Courses are facilitated using comprehensible input and other best practices based on current language acquisition research. Students will be listening more than speaking; reading more than writing. Engaging in an input-based class is rigorous in terms of attention and sustained focus during class. It is essential that students be willing to participate in the group. TAPA offers a full Spanish heritage speaker course sequence as well as language and culture courses.

Literacy is a major component of all classes, including class novels, short stories, news articles, and independent reading. Students will analyze music, films, telenovelas, and podcasts, honing media literacy skills along with language comprehension.

A blended and personalized learning approach is implemented to allow for increased differentiation, student choice, digital literacy skill implementation, and small group time.

Guiding standards for all courses include: ACTFL 5C's (communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, communities) and "I can" statements, CCSS Literacy Standards, 21st Century Skills Maps, Teaching Tolerance's Social Justice Standards, and RI SEL Standards.

### **Spanish Language and Culture I**

Students can expect to understand Spanish from day one, in both written and oral forms. Reading short texts is a core practice. Student output is minimal at these levels. Content is student-generated and story-centered. Topics include exploration of self, immediate community, and global issues through fiction and non-fiction.

Spanish I is taught using a natural approach to language learning. This method is based on providing a maximum amount of comprehensible input to the students, leading to natural language acquisition. Emphasis is placed on reading and listening to short stories, as well as vocabulary building. Reading comprehension is essential for success and the class will focus on activities to improve students' reading comprehension in Spanish. The class will read several leveled novels together, and students will also read Spanish or bilingual texts of their choice during independent reading.

### **Spanish Language and Culture II**

Spanish II is appropriate for students with familiarity and ease of understanding basic spoken and written Spanish. Students build upon their foundation as the length and complexity of texts increase. Emphasis is placed on reading, listening to, and creating short stories in class, as well as vocabulary building. Reading comprehension is important for success and the teacher will focus on activities to

improve students' reading comprehension in Spanish. The class will read several leveled novels together, and students will also be expected to read Spanish books of their choice.

### **Spanish for Heritage Speakers I**

Designed for heritage learners of Spanish who already have some oral language proficiency, this course can accommodate students from a wide range of linguistic backgrounds. Students will build upon their current language skills to develop language and cultural literacy, as well as their own creative expression. This course will guide students to develop a deeper appreciation for their own cultural heritage while recognizing that there are many ways to be Latinx.

During this course, students will gain confidence using Spanish to express their own thoughts on social and academic themes, interact with other speakers of the language, understand oral and written messages, make oral and written presentations, reflect on language variation, and critically view and evaluate media resources and websites. Students will be able to understand the material presented on a variety of topics related to contemporary events and issues in Hispanic communities.

### **Spanish for Heritage Speakers II**

This course is designed to continue to develop and challenge students' ability in speaking, reading, writing, listening, and cultural understanding in Spanish. Spanish-speaking students are able to study Spanish formally in an academic and creative setting in the same way native English-speaking students study English language arts.

Reading, both as a class and independently, is the core component of the course, including newspaper articles, short stories, and novels. Students practice translating texts and critiquing translations. Students work to further develop their Spanish literacy and academic language skills, to learn more about their language and cultural heritage, and to enhance college and career opportunities as they become both bilingual and biliterate.

## **World Language Independent Study**

Students who demonstrate a strong commitment to learning a language other than Spanish may pursue that language via an administrative-approved independent study. This course is completed primarily using online resources and programs and is overseen by the World Language instructor. Students are expected to set language focus goals, manage their time effectively, complete all assignments given, reflect on progress frequently and adjust as needed, and communicate regularly with the World Language instructor both in person and virtually. This course is graded on a Pass/Fail basis.

## **Honors**

The purpose of the Humanities Honors classes is to provide students with a more intense and faster-paced curriculum. Their content is delivered in a lecture/discussion style format. Topics in the Honors classes are explored more deeply than in the regular level classes through the use of independent research and study. Honors classes are more closely related to college-style classes and will be marked as an Honors class on their official transcript. An additional 0.5 is assigned to the Grade Point Average (GPA) value for each Honors class credit earned, i.e. a grade of A- (normally worth 3.7) will be worth 4.2 GPA points.

In contrast, regular classes involve more scaffolded instruction, where the instructor may use guided notes and other graphic organizers/educational tools to deliver the material to the students. The regular-level class will contain components of research and independent instruction. Whereas the Honors class projects are largely autonomous, regular-level projects will be scaffolded in both content and time management.

### *Course Content*

Students enrolled in Honors classes will be required to complete work that challenges them and requires them to make use of their skills and abilities to their fullest. Work will range from independent research projects, to class lectures, to student-led classes.

### *Placement*

Students will be placed in the Humanities Honors Classes using the following criteria:

- A. Lexile scores (and/or other standardized test scores)
- B. Academic performance in previous Humanities classes.
- C. Scholarly work ethic in previous Humanities classes.
- D. Teacher recommendations
- E. Student/family inquiry

### *Honors Opt-In*

Before the end of Q1, any student in the regular-level class wishing to be moved to the Honors class must inform the instructor and guidance, in an email that includes reasoning and previous grades in the subject (which can be found via report cards on Skyward). The student must also submit the [TAPA Schedule Change Request Form](#). The instructor, guidance, and the student will meet and discuss the reasoning for the request and the best path of success for the student. Switching classes is not guaranteed - it is based on space availability and scheduling. Students who opt-in to the Honors class will be on a trial basis.

Any student or parent who wishes to have their child considered for Honors in the upcoming school year must make this known to the instructor and guidance, ideally in writing via email. The request to move into the Honors class will be considered based on the criteria listed above.

### *Honors Opt-Out*

Any student (or parent) that believes they are unable to be successful in the Honors class for academic reasons must submit a formal written request via email to their teacher and guidance prior to the end of Q1, in addition to filling out the [TAPA Schedule Change Request Form](#), which is available from the Guidance Counselor. The final decision for Opt-Out will be discussed and based on guidance/teacher approval. We encourage students to stick with the Honors-level classes for the full year, so approval to opt-out is rare.

### *Removal from Honors*

A student may be removed from the Honors class if the student's academic performance does not meet the standards of the Honors program in terms of academic performance (grades dropping below a C-), attendance, or behavior; or if the instructor has individual concerns regarding the student's ability to be successful in the class. Prior to a potential removal, a meeting will be held with the teacher, student, guidance counselor, and parent to discuss what the student must accomplish and in what time frame in

order to remain in the Honors class, which will be known as the “trial period.” At the end of the trial period, the guidance counselor will communicate the decision to the student, teacher, and family.

## **Dual Enrollment**

Dual Enrollment is the central advanced learning opportunity available to TAPA 11th and 12th grade students, allowing them to take up to two college courses at local colleges per semester free of tuition. Dual Enrollment provides students with college credits for a fraction of the cost and allows them to explore topics of interest and challenge themselves. TAPA’s CCRI Dual Enrollment courses may occur during the school day, on the weekends, or after school, but they must not conflict with required TAPA classes. Participation in the Dual Enrollment program is an optional privilege that must be approved by the Guidance Counselor. Specific course selections must also receive approval from the TAPA Administration. TAPA operates in accordance with the Rhode Island Department of Education’s Regulations for Dual and Concurrent Enrollment.

### *Information from RIDE*

The Rhode Island Department of Education publishes and disseminates a list of approved courses to be offered and the program requirements to all secondary schools by March 31st of each school year. Accordingly, TAPA shall provide all students and their families with the available course and program information at the time of course selection for the subsequent school year.

TAPA shall adopt a dual and concurrent enrollment policy and provide students and their families with information about dual and concurrent enrollment coursework requirements and the potential benefits and consequences of dual and concurrent enrollment prior to approving a request for dual and concurrent enrollment. This information shall include, but not be limited to:

- a. Student eligibility criteria;
- b. Conditions warranting removal from enrollment;
- c. The requirements of the dual and concurrent enrollment course;
- d. The consequences of failing or not completing a course, including the effect on completing TAPA’s proficiency-based graduation requirements;
- e. The process for granting dual and concurrent enrollment academic credit at both the postsecondary institution and the secondary school;
- f. The benefits to the student of successfully completing a dual or concurrent enrollment course, including the potential reduction of the overall cost of, and the amount of time required, for obtaining a college degree;
- g. Available educational support services at the secondary school and the postsecondary institution;
- h. The student’s academic, attendance, and conduct responsibilities; and
- i. That scheduling and transportation for dual enrollment coursework at a postsecondary institution shall be the student’s and/or family’s responsibility.

### *Eligibility*

Secondary school students may take dual and concurrent enrollment coursework upon the approval of their Director of Student Pathways in accordance with TAPA’s criteria. The criteria shall be based on the student’s academic, behavioral, and attendance record and, if applicable, the student’s results on an ACT, SAT, ACCUPLACER, PSAT, EXPLORE, or state standardized assessments. Student age will not be a determiner of enrollment. Postsecondary institutions shall establish eligibility criteria and, if applicable, assessment standards to determine college readiness. In the case of career and technical education dual

and concurrent enrollment coursework, TAPA's students must meet the course-specific eligibility requirements.

Students shall not be denied access to dual and concurrent enrollment coursework provided they meet TAPA's criteria and there is space available in the course. Students with disabilities or students who are English Language Learners shall receive the protections, services, and accommodations as prescribed by federal and state law in accordance with the policies and procedures of the postsecondary institution in the case of dual enrollment or the secondary school in the case of concurrent enrollment.

### *Academics*

TAPA has established partnerships with local institutions, including CCRI, concerning dual and concurrent enrollment. TAPA shall ensure that participating students receive both college credit and high school credit for the courses taken at the college level. Grades and credits will be documented on both the college and high school transcripts.

Dual enrollment courses shall count toward a student's coursework graduation requirements if the student complies with the postsecondary institution's grading, attendance, and behavioral policies and successfully completes the course. Concurrent enrollment courses shall count toward the student's high school coursework graduation requirements if the student, pursuant to TAPA's grading, behavioral, and attendance policies, successfully completes the course. TAPA may give a dual or concurrent enrollment course extra weight in calculating a high school grade point average (GPA).

Instructors of concurrent enrollment courses at TAPA shall be approved by the postsecondary credit-granting institution and possess similar qualifications as instructors teaching the corresponding course at the postsecondary institution. Further, the instructor shall hold the certification required by the Rhode Island Department of Education for the course that is being taught.

### *Costs*

Although each post-secondary institution has different policies and procedures, students participating in dual and concurrent enrollment may possibly take college courses at no or reduced cost to them. TAPA shall provide all interested students and families with financial information as part of the application process.

Dual enrollment and concurrent enrollment course costs will vary by course and delivery method. TAPA shall support, if financially possible, the cost of providing dual and concurrent enrollment programming. Given the postsecondary benefit, TAPA may ask students and families to contribute all or a portion of the cost of providing dual and concurrent enrollment programming. No low-income student, as defined by the Rhode Island Department of Education, shall be denied access to dual or concurrent enrollment coursework on their inability to pay course-related tuition and fees.

### *Transportation*

Students taking college courses shall be responsible for their own transportation to and from home or TAPA and the college.

### **Advanced Course Network**

The Advanced Course Network (ACN) is an optional program that allows TAPA students (predominantly, but not limited to 11th and 12th grade students) the opportunity to take advanced

placement or other courses not offered at TAPA at a partnering school or institution in Rhode Island. ACN courses may occur during the school day, on the weekends, or after school, but they must not conflict with required TAPA classes. Participation in the ACN program is an optional privilege that must be approved by Guidance and the TAPA Administration, contingent upon strong grades and attendance in TAPA classes. The TAPA Guidance Counselor must approve specific class choices on RIDE's electronic enrollment system.

### **Application Process for Dual Enrollment and the Advanced Course Network**

Rising 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Students: Dual Enrollment and Advanced Course Network applications will be provided to all 11<sup>th</sup> grade students at the end of their 11<sup>th</sup> grade year. Applications will be considered based on current and past grades, test scores, attendance/ timeliness, behavior, maturity, and readiness for the college environment. All students will have the opportunity to speak with the Guidance Counselor as to what is in their academic best interest for senior year. Participation in Dual Enrollment or the Advanced Course Network is an *optional privilege* that must be approved by Guidance and the TAPA Administration.

Any senior taking a Dual Enrollment or Advanced Course Network course *within normal school hours* will receive assistance with arranging transportation from TAPA. 12<sup>th</sup> grade students taking such courses *outside of normal school hours* will be required to arrange their own transportation to and from the course site. The Guidance Counselor is available to help students coordinate their own transportation methods, such as public transportation or carpooling.

Rising 11<sup>th</sup> Grade Students: Dual Enrollment and Advanced Course Network applications will be provided to rising 11<sup>th</sup> grade students with a GPA over 3.0. Nominations and approvals will be considered based on current and past grades, test scores, attendance/timeliness, behavior, maturity, and readiness for the college environment. 11<sup>th</sup> grade Dual Enrollment classes may not take place during the TAPA school day; they must be taken outside of school time.

As all Dual Enrollment and Advanced Course Network courses will take place *outside of normal school hours* for any participating 11<sup>th</sup> grade students, students participating in their junior year will be required to arrange their own transportation to and from the course site.

### **What are the requirements for a student who wants to participate in Dual Enrollment/ACN?**

- Completed TAPA Dual Enrollment Application
- Completed High School Enrichment Form to Guidance
- Willingness to complete Accuplacer test prep
- Successful completion of the Accuplacer Exam at CCRI in March
- Willingness to arrange transportation if the course of choice is after school
- For 12<sup>th</sup> grade students: commitment to attending a pre-assigned Dual Enrollment class at TAPA
- Approval from Guidance and the TAPA Administration

## **TAPA Code of Conduct**

At TAPA, we believe that our role is to help students take responsibility for their actions and their lives and to empower them in their growth toward becoming effective adults. We believe that students should leave us as better decision-makers, both in avoiding negative behaviors and in choosing positive ones.

- **Be Respectful** – Mutual respect is central to any effective community. Listening to each other, cooperating, treating each other respectfully, and caring for property are essential practices in our community.
- **Be Safe** – Taking good care of yourself includes a proper diet, frequent exercise, sufficient sleep, stress management, and good choices in regard to tobacco, alcohol, drugs, and risk-taking.
- **Be Honest and Fair** – Honesty and fair play form the basis of trust both in and out of the classroom. Make sure you can stand behind your work and your word. Dishonesty in any form, including theft and lying, is not tolerated.
- **Be Responsible for what you say and do** – Taking charge of your life is a major step on the road to maturity. The deliberate planning and development of strategies will make you a more effective person. Another aspect of maturity involves recognizing when you have made a mistake, admitting it, and learning from it.

## **Student Discipline Procedures**

TAPA believes that a straightforward and honest system of student discipline, with developmentally appropriate consequences, is essential to prepare our students to be active and successful citizens of a global society. It is the policy of TAPA to not involve the police in school matters whenever possible.

Central to the student discipline procedures of Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts is restorative justice or the belief that all parties deserve to be heard, and that it is the responsibility of the school to seek the truth in every situation. TAPA will do so by interviewing students and others involved in any reported incidents. In some instances, it may be necessary to search student property, including cell phones and/or laptops.

### **Teacher Detention**

Teacher detentions may be held during lunch or after school. If a student fails to attend the assigned detention, the teacher will send a referral to the Dean of Students and two detentions will be assigned. Families/guardians may be called for a meeting.

### **Suspension**

With regard to conduct that gives rise to a student's suspension (in school or out of school), the Head of School and/or the Dean of Students may suspend a student for such period as the Administrator deems appropriate, up to ten school days. The administrator may also refer the student to the Board of Directors for a longer suspension unless the student's parent agrees to the suspension determined by the administrator.

Students who are suspended are not allowed to come on campus or participate in school activities, on or off-campus, during the period of their suspension. This means that the student may not attend any field trips or participate in any TAPA-sponsored out-of-school-time events. Students may also be given In-School Solutions for a minor or repeated infraction. Students may forfeit their right to attend special school functions in the quarter in which they receive either an in-school or out-of-school suspension.

With regard to the discipline of a student with disabilities, every decision-maker shall consider whether the student's conduct is a manifestation of the student's disability and, if so, to what extent TAPA can reasonably accommodate the manifestation of the student's disability without disciplining the student. In determining the appropriateness of any form of discipline, any decision-maker may consider the totality of circumstances surrounding the student's disability.



## School Jurisdiction

“At school” means: on school premises; at any school-sponsored activity or event whether or not it is held on school premises; on a school-transportation vehicle; at an official school bus stop; using property or equipment provided by the school or acts which create a material and substantial disruption of the education process or the orderly operation of the school.

## Confidentiality

It is important to note that consequences given for serious offenses will not be shared with the entire school community or to family members who are not a student’s parent, guardian or designee. Discipline decisions are given in ways that are fair and equitable and at times will often not be the exact same for every student. Should students or family members have questions or concerns regarding discipline decisions, they can contact one of the administrators

## Infractions

We believe that a structured environment with clear expectations for behavior and academic success helps students learn the difference between expected behavior and inappropriate or unexpected behavior. Through formal and informal educational experiences, and by our response to improper choices, we help our students to become better decision-makers.

Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts defines three levels of infractions and stipulates typical consequences of each. Please be aware that circumstances specific to a case may lead to more or less severe consequences. Generally, a first infraction warrants a warning, and a student is reminded and redirected to making good choices.

### Minor and Mid-Level Infractions

The following behavior may result in a consequence specific to the infraction. For example, prohibited items will be confiscated, dress code violations will be corrected, loss of privileges, or detention with problem-solving strategies may be used, or other logical and appropriate consequences may be assigned. Repetition of minor infractions will lead to more severe consequences.

#### Minor Infractions

- Disruption in the cafeteria
- Unauthorized food or drink outside of the cafeteria
- Throwing of objects
- Late to class/school
- Left class without permission
- Disrespectful behavior
- Dress Code Violation
- Horseplay/Play fighting
- Inappropriate language
- Wrong place/wrong time
- Disrupting the academic success of other students

#### Mid-Level Infractions

- Repeat occurrence of any Minor Infraction

- Cutting class
- Skipping teacher detention
- Excessive tardies (class or school)
- Unauthorized leaving of school grounds
- Not signing in to school when late
- Bus misconduct
- Spreading rumors
- Elevator misuse
- Abuse of School Equipment
- Skipping detention
- Inappropriate use of school equipment
- Stealing (depends on the severity of infraction)
- Threats (depends on the severity of infraction)
- Forgery

### **Major Infractions**

The following behaviors are violations of major school rules. Violations of major school rules may result in severe consequences or disciplinary action, including the possibility of suspensions for a first offense.

- Repeated occurrence of any Mid-Level Infraction
- Violence, Fighting, and/or knowledge of or inciting a fight
- Violence towards another person, or their property or good name
- Harassment (name-calling, obscene gestures)
- Lying to Dean of Students/Administration
- Bullying of any kind
- Sexual Harassment
- Indecent exposure
- Endangering the safety of any student or staff member
- Stealing (depends on the severity of infraction)
- Threats (depends on the severity of infraction)
- Possession of a weapon
- Possession, use, or distribution, of drugs or alcohol
- False Alarms
- Tampering with, or inappropriate use of, fire-safety equipment (e.g. extinguishers, alarms, fire escapes)
- Behavior that brings disgrace to the good name of Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts.
- Chronic failure to respond to correction: Behavior that persistently demonstrates an unwillingness or inability to live by the academic or social expectations of the School (i.e. very rude, disrespectful, insubordinate, or uncooperative behaviors)

### **Infractions of Specific Note:**

#### *1. Threats and Harassment*

TAPA has no tolerance for violence or threats of harm. If it is determined that a threat was made with intent, the threat-maker will be subject to serious disciplinary action. Any object brought to school that is considered to be a potential danger to others will be confiscated and disciplinary action will occur.

For the purposes of this policy, the term harassment shall be defined as conduct based on gender, gender identity, race, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation or disability, that creates an intimidating,

hostile, or offensive educational or work environment and/ or that interferes with another individual/s education or work performance. Please see the sections on SEXUAL HARASSMENT and BULLYING, below

### *2. Plagiarism and Cheating*

Plagiarism is the submission of another's ideas or written words as one's own. This includes the purchase or use of online essays. Cheating includes copying another's work on an assignment or assessment or allowing that your work be copied by another.

In order to prevent cheating and plagiarism, students will be taught about what plagiarism is and how to avoid it, beginning in 7th grade and continuing through 12th grade, as is appropriate to their assignments. This includes teaching students about proper citation.

The penalties for plagiarism and cheating are:

- 1st offense: Zero on assignment or assessment; parent/caregiver contacted; one-day in-school suspension (student may be allowed to re-do the assignment during in-school)
- 2nd offense: Zero on assignment or assessment; parent/caregiver contacted; two-days in-school suspension; Disciplinary Meeting

Students must be aware that plagiarism and cheating are the same as stealing and lying. If students choose to plagiarize/cheat, they are stealing the work and ideas of another individual and are severely compromising their own integrity. Once they choose to submit this work to their teacher with their own name on it, they are lying to their teacher.

### *3. Smoking*

The Smoking Policy includes: tobacco, chewing tobacco, and e-cigarettes/ vaporizers. Under Rhode Island law, all tobacco, chewing tobacco, and e-cigarettes/ vaporizers are prohibited in all school buildings and facilities, on school grounds, and in school buses by all individuals.

### *4. Use or Possession of Drugs, Alcohol, and Narcotics*

TAPA strives to provide a healthy, safe and supportive school environment for all students, staff, and visitors. Since under Rhode Island law, it is illegal for any individual under the age of 21 to use or possess alcoholic beverages and, regardless of age, to use or possess an illicit drug, both are prohibited at TAPA.

### *5. Vandalism*

Vandalism, including the destruction of, damage to, or effacement of school property or the property of another is expressly prohibited. Restitution will be made for damaged property. The property of school personnel is covered by this rule 24 hours a day.

### *6. Food and Drink Outside of the Cafeteria*

Generally speaking, TAPA only permits students to eat and drink in the Cafeteria at mealtimes. However, students may also be given permission by teachers to consume food and drink in class for special events. Consumption of food and drink is never permissible near a computer.

### *7. Sexual Harassment*

TAPA prohibits all forms of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that interferes with a student's ability to learn, study, work, achieve, or participate in school activities. It is a form of bullying. It includes a wide range of behavior, such as: insults and name-calling, off-color jokes or displays of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, Intimidation by words or actions, unwanted touching, such as pinching, patting, grabbing, poking, slapping, or rubbing against a student's body, pressure for sexual activity, sexual assault, and rape. Other similar behaviors also may be prohibited under the school's policy. The school policy also prohibits retaliation against students who complain about harassment or against students or others who cooperate in a school investigation of sexual harassment.

This school policy applies to everyone – teachers, administrators, guests, artists, volunteers, maintenance workers, cafeteria staff, and students, among others. All are prohibited from sexually harassing students. The school policy protects male and female students equally from harassment – including when boys sexually harass boys and when girls sexually harass girls. These rules apply to students harassing teachers, as well as teachers harassing students.

If you are experiencing sexual harassment, tell a teacher, the School Social Worker, or an administrator, either in writing or in person, or tell a parent, who will work with the student and the school to stop the harassment. Disciplinary actions will depend on the seriousness of the harassment. For very serious harassment, such as sexual touching, or sexual assault, the school may suspend a student for up to 10 days. In the case of an employee, illegal behavior such as this may end in immediate termination.

#### *8. Misuse of Technology*

In regard to Chromebook use, students must follow the instructions below at all times:

##### **Things students can't do with their Chromebook:**

- Students may not send, access, download, or distribute any school-inappropriate content.
- Students may not attack, annoy, harass or bully others
- Students may not download or install anything on the Chromebook.
- Students may not change any privacy/security/restriction settings.
- Students may not use proxy sites

##### **Things students have to do with their Chromebook:**

- Students may only use Chromebook applications/programs as instructed by a teacher.

##### **How to use email on the Chromebook:**

- Only TAPA email addresses may be used on the Chromebook.
- Students may not use or access another person's accounts, emails, files, or data.
- Students must check their email at least once per day.

##### **What about privacy on your Chromebook (Hint: you have none!):**

- TAPA has the right to inspect any aspect of any Chromebook for any reason.

##### **Taking care of the Chromebook:**

- Students are responsible for having their Chromebook with them during all school hours
- Students must carry the Chromebook with two hands at all times.
- Students may not eat/drink near the Chromebook, nor may have liquids near the Chromebook.

Students may not use their Chromebook while walking (hallways, etc.).  
Students must use their Chromebook on a desk or other stable horizontal work surface.

Students annually sign a contract stating that they agree to follow the rules stated above and understand that failure to follow these rules will result in my Chromebook privileges being taken away. Students are financially responsible for any damage caused to their Chromebook due to failure to follow these rules.

Every teacher using Chromebooks must be actively monitoring student Chromebook use. All TAPA staff are provided with a locking charging cart for all the Chromebooks assigned to their classroom. It is their responsibility to keep the devices locked whenever they are not being used and to keep the key on their person.

## **TAPA's Bullying Policy**

Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts policy towards bullying and harassment is in accordance with Rhode Island's Safe School Act (§16-21-34 of the General Laws of RI). As set forth by state law:

### *1. Definitions:*

Bullying means the use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof directed at a student that: a. Causes physical or emotional harm to the student or damage to the student's property; b. Places the student in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property; c. Creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or abusive educational environment for the student; d. Infringes on the rights of the student to participate in school activities; or e. Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. The expression, physical act, or gesture may include but is not limited to, an incident or incidents that may be reasonably perceived as being motivated by characteristics such as: race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression or mental, physical, or sensory disability, intellectual ability or by any other distinguishing characteristic. Bullying most often occurs as repeated behavior and often is not a single incident between the bullying/cyber-bullying offender(s) and the bullying victim(s).

Cyber-Bullying means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, texting or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photoelectric or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications.

Forms of cyber-bullying may include but are not limited to: a. The creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person; b. The knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages; or c. The distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of materials on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the creation, impersonation, or distribution results in any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (a) to (e) of the definition of bullying.

At school means: a. on school premises, b. at any school-sponsored activity or event whether or not it is held on school premises, c. on a school-transportation vehicle, d. at an official school bus stop, e. using

property or equipment provided by the school, or f. acts which create a material and substantial disruption of the education process or the orderly operation of the school.

## *2. School climate*

Bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation against any person associated with a report of bullying or the investigation thereof is prohibited at Trinity Academy for the Performing Art. School staff shall take all reasonable measures to prevent bullying at school. Such measures may include professional development and prevention activities, parental workshops, and student assemblies among other strategies. School faculty, administration and staff, at all times, will model courteous behavior to each other, to students, and to school visitors. Abusive or humiliating language or demeanor will not be accepted. Additionally, students and their families are expected to exhibit courteous behavior to all members of the learning community in school and at school-sponsored events.

## *3. Policy oversight and responsibility*

The Head of School shall be responsible for the implementation and oversight of this bullying policy. The Head of School shall provide the governing board with a summary report of incidents, responses, and any other bullying-related issues at least twice annually.

## *4. Information Dissemination*

The Head of School shall ensure that students, staff, volunteers, and families/legal guardians are provided information regarding this Policy. This information shall include methods of discouraging and preventing this type of behavior, the procedure to file a complaint, and the disciplinary action that may be taken against those who commit acts in violation of this policy. This policy shall be:

- a. Distributed annually to students, staff, volunteers, and families/legal guardians
- b. Included in student codes of conduct, disciplinary policies, and student handbooks
- c. A prominently posted link on the homepage of the school's website

## *5. Reporting*

The Head of School shall establish, and prominently publicize to students, staff, volunteers, and families/guardians, how a report of bullying may be filed and how this report will be acted upon. The victim of bullying, anyone who witnesses an incidence of bullying, and anyone who has credible information that an act of bullying has taken place may file a report of bullying. Any student or staff member who believes he/she is being bullied should immediately report such circumstances to an appropriate staff member, teacher or administrator.

Families/Guardians of the victim of bullying and families/guardians of the alleged perpetrator of the bullying shall be notified within twenty-four (24) hours of the incident report. When there is a reasonable suspicion that a student is either a bully or a victim of bullying, the families/ guardians of the student will be notified immediately by the Dean of Students or another administrator.

Responsibility of staff: School staff, including volunteers, who observe an act of bullying or who have reasonable grounds to believe that bullying is taking place must report the bullying to school authorities. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

Responsibility of students: Students who observe an act of bullying or who have reasonable grounds to believe that bullying is taking place must report the bullying to school authorities. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action. The victim of bullying, however, shall not be subject to discipline for failing

to report the bullying. Student reports of bullying or retaliation may be made anonymously, provided, however, that no disciplinary action shall be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

**Prohibition against retaliation:** Retaliation or threats of retaliation in any form designed to intimidate the victim of bullying, those who are witnesses to bullying, or those investigating an incident of bullying shall not be tolerated. Retaliation or threat of retaliation will result in the imposition of discipline in accordance with the school behavior code.

**False reporting/accusations:** A school employee, school volunteer or student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation shall be disciplined in accordance with the school behavior code.

**Reports in good faith:** A school employee, school volunteer, student, parent/ legal guardian, or caregiver who promptly reports, in good faith, an act of bullying to the appropriate school official designated in the school's policy shall be immune from a cause of action for damages arising from reporting bullying.

#### *6. Investigation/response*

The Head of School shall promptly investigate all allegations of bullying, harassment, or intimidation. If the allegation is found to be credible, appropriate disciplinary actions, subject to applicable due process requirements, will be imposed. Any qualified staff members may be utilized to mediate bullying situations. The investigation will include an assessment by the school counselor of what effect the bullying, harassment or intimidation has had on the victim. A student who engages in continuous and/or serious acts of bullying will also be referred to the school counselor.

**Police notification:** Immediate notification of the local law enforcement agency will be made when circumstances warrant the pursuit of criminal charges against the perpetrator.

**Protection:** if a student is the victim of serious or persistent bullying: a. The Head of School will intervene immediately to provide the student with a safe educational environment. b. The interventions will be developed, if possible, with input from the student, their parent/guardian, and staff. c. The families/ guardians of a victim shall also be notified of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation.

#### *7. Disciplinary Action*

The disciplinary actions for violations of the bullying policy shall be determined by the school. Disciplinary actions for violations of the bullying policy shall balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. The severity of the disciplinary action shall be aligned to the severity of the bullying behavior.

The range of disciplinary actions that may be taken against a perpetrator for bullying, cyberbullying or retaliation shall include, but not be limited to: a. Admonitions and warnings; b. Parental/ Guardian notification and meetings; c. Detention; d. In-school suspension; e. Loss of school-provided transportation or loss of student parking pass; f. Loss of the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities; g. Loss of the opportunity to participate in school social activities; h. Loss of the opportunity to participate in graduation exercises or middle school promotional activities; i. Police contact; j. School

suspension: No student shall be suspended from school unless it is deemed to be a necessary consequence of the violation of this Policy.

#### *8. Social Services/Counseling*

Referral to appropriate counseling and/or social shall be provided for bullying victims, perpetrators and appropriate family members of said students.

#### *9. Social Networking*

Students shall be prohibited from accessing social networking sites in school, except for educational or instructional purposes and with the prior approval from school administration.

#### *10. Other Redress*

This section does not prevent a victim of bullying, cyberbullying or retaliation from seeking redress under any other available law, either civil or criminal. This section does not create *or alter any tort liability*.

#### *11. Adoption of Policy*

The governing bodies of all schools approved for the purpose of §§16-19-1 and 16-19-2 shall adopt this Policy by June 30, 2012.

#### *12. Bullying Reporting Documents - Please see Appendix 1*

### **Appealing a Disciplinary Action**

TAPA undertakes disciplinary action in a restorative and developmentally appropriate manner that is supportive of the students and their families and works collaboratively for the best interest of the student and the school. When disciplinary action is taken, TAPA follows the policies and practices outlined in The TAPA Handbook and all relevant state laws.

Should a TAPA family believe that a disciplinary action violates The TAPA Handbook or state law, they may appeal the disciplinary action to the Head of School. Following that, if the family believes that they have exhausted their remedies within the TAPA Staff and Administration, they may request a *Board Disciplinary Hearing*.

At a *Board Disciplinary Hearing*, a committee of the TAPA Board, designated in accordance with TAPA By-Laws, hears a family's appeal of a disciplinary action taken by the TAPA Administration. Within 10 business days of the request, the TAPA Board Committee will provide written notice of the date and time of the *Hearing* and advise that the family can obligate the Board Committee to conduct the *Hearing* in an open session. No later than three days prior to the *Hearing*, the TAPA Administration will provide all parties with relevant printed documentation, including: notice of each major disciplinary offense, an explanation of the facts as known to school personnel, and copies of any applicable records.

The purpose of a *Board Disciplinary Hearing* is to identify whether or not the TAPA Administration adhered to all relevant state laws and Board-approved policies in undertaking the disciplinary action.

At the *Board Disciplinary Hearing*, the TAPA Administration will present an overview of the disciplinary action, including the results of its investigation and the basis for its decision, and any consequences. The Administration may do so with or without the assistance of counsel. The student and



family will be given the opportunity to address the Board Committee, to present evidence, to publicly speak with staff in attendance, and to be assisted by counsel at their expense if they so choose. The Board Committee will make a record of the hearing.

**The Result of a Board Disciplinary Hearing:** At the close of the *Board Disciplinary Hearing*, the TAPA Board Committee will vote to affirm or reverse the decision of the TAPA Administration. This decision will be based on the committee’s understanding of whether or not the Administration adhered to TAPA policies and state laws. This decision will be made by majority vote. The TAPA Board Committee will then issue a written decision.

## TAPA’s School-wide Expectations Charts

The TAPA Staff works each year to define what appropriate behavior looks like and sounds like in different areas of the school. This is done to ensure that students know how to behave throughout the school day and throughout the school building. We also include the expectations for adult behaviors in these Expectations Charts, in order to hold ourselves accountable for our role in creating a safe and welcoming school.

<b>Before School Starts (7:30-8:00 am)</b>	
<b>Looks like</b>	<b>Sounds like</b>
All students must be in the cafeteria; Not in the office, or main building.	Students can ask to go to the bathroom.
Students sitting, eating breakfast, and socializing.  All tables are welcoming: Adults model/monitor /teach this	Social Chatter. It should be loud, but respectful, with no foul language  “Please” and “Thank You” to Ms. Lisa
At least one staff member is outside supervising bus arrival, and one is in the main lobby. Others are in the cafeteria, one with the trash can. Adults are smiling	Adult attention should be on students, meaning minimal computer use/cell phone use/adult-to-adult conversations  Students may use their phones but should be monitored.
Students remain seated. Food remains on plates or in mouths.	Adults announce cleanup, dismissal. Staff directing students toward the right staircase depending on Upper/Lower school students.
No food or non-water drinks permitted outside of the Cafeteria	Upper School students can be sent to Advisory as early as 7:45 am. Lower School students are “picked up” by LS staff before 8 am. Cafeteria “closes” at 7:58 am

<b>Students in Hallways and Stairwells</b>	
<b>Looks like</b>	<b>Sounds like</b>

Passing time only lasts for two minutes. Hallways are empty after that	Respectful volume and language.
TEACHERS: In the halls during passing time	After two minutes hallways should be quiet
STUDENTS: Walking (and probably talking) towards their destination. Taking one step at a time on the stairwells	Students laughing/talking, Adults giving gentle reminders of expectations
Students are not going to the bathroom or to the nurse	

<b>Going to the bathroom (and then going back to class)</b>	
<b>Looks like</b>	<b>Sounds like</b>
Only one student per class goes to the bathroom. No Bathroom breaks during the first or last five minutes of class Bathroom breaks do not occur during passing time	The student is silent when leaving and entering the classroom  If a student is in the bathroom for more than 10 minutes, the nurse is notified
PROCEDURE: Students will take the classroom bathroom pass, hang it outside the bathroom, and sterilize it upon return to the classroom.	The student is non-disruptive in the hallways

<b>End of Day Dismissal, between 2:50 - 3:00 pm</b>	
<b>Looks like</b>	<b>Sounds like</b>
<u>Upper School is dismissed to exit the building at 3 pm</u> US teachers not on dismissal duty ensure hallways are clear  <u>Lower School is dismissed to the common area at 3 pm</u> LS students line up depending on their method of transportation (walking, yellow bus, etc). LS House Leaders escort students to the LS stairs, and out (not through the Black Box) upon bus arrival LS teachers not on dismissal duty ensure hallways are clear	Students talk quietly and exit quickly.  They represent TAPA well when walking down the street.  Teachers encouraging students to leave in a positive tone
Dismissal Lead is in the parking lot with at least one other teacher Other teachers on Dismissal Duty are in front of the building	

<b>Schoolwide Signals and Language</b>	
<b>Looks like</b>	<b>Sounds like</b>

<p>One hand up from Person Requesting Attention  Other staffers use silent strategies to get all quiet  All staff support fully</p>	<p>Counts down loudly and slowly from 5  Room gets increasingly quiet-to-silent  Students remind neighbors quietly/silently  Adults avoid “SHHHHH!”</p>
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<b>Lunchtime in the Cafeteria (very similar to breakfast in the Cafeteria)</b>	
<b>Looks like</b>	<b>Sounds like</b>
<p>All students must go to lunch.  All students are either in the Cafeteria or the restroom.</p>	<p>Students can ask to go to the bathroom.  Students are quiet while in halls being respectful of classes in session.</p>
<p>Students will enter the cafeteria and take a seat at a table.  Students sitting, eating lunch, and socializing.  All tables are welcoming: Adults model, monitor, and teach this</p>	<p>Social Chatter. It should be loud, but respectful, with no foul language  “Please” and “Thank You” to servers</p>
<p>Teachers are scattered throughout the lunchroom, including in/around the food pick-up area and the microwaves, engaging with students.   Adults assist with cleanup: “Put your trash in the trash”</p>	<p>Adult attention should be on students, meaning minimal computer use/cell phone use/adult-to-adult conversations   Students may use their phones but should be monitored.</p>
<p>Students remain seated.  Food remains on plates or in mouths.</p>	<p>Adults announce cleanup and dismissal</p>
<p>No food or non-water drinks permitted outside of the Cafeteria</p>	<p>Advisors guiding their advisees up to Advisory</p>
<p>Students may only leave the cafeteria with a pass and without food.</p>	

# Appendix One - Bullying Report Form

Reporting Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_ Time of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please answer the following questions about this reporting incident:**

List the name of the alleged bully, and/or cyberbully. If name is not known, provide any identifiable information:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Relationship between you and the alleged bully, and/or cyberbully:

\_\_\_\_\_

Describe the incident:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Where did it happen? \_\_\_\_\_

Were there any witnesses? [ ] yes [ ] no      If yes, who? \_\_\_\_\_

Other information, including previous incidents or threats:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I certify that all statements made in the complaint are true and complete. Any intentional false statement of fact will subject me to appropriate discipline. I authorize school officials to disclose the information I provide only as necessary in pursuing the investigation.

Signatures:

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

School official receiving complaint: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*This document shall remain confidential*

**Bullying Report Response Form:**

Finding: Bullying\* \_\_\_\_\_ did \_\_\_\_\_ did not occur. Date \_\_\_\_\_

*\*(Finding to be based upon all of the facts and circumstances and whether it is more likely than not that bullying occurred)*

**The Following Responsive Measures Were Undertaken:**

\_\_\_\_\_ measures to provide the student with a safe educational environment; describe in detail here:

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\_\_\_\_\_ disciplinary action against the perpetrator(s) proposed to school authorities;

\_\_\_\_\_ assessment by School Social Worker (for both the victim and the perpetrator);

\_\_\_\_\_ referral for appropriate counseling and/or social services;

\_\_\_\_\_ notification to student’s IEP team (when the victim is a student with a disability);

\_\_\_\_\_ notification to families/guardians of the victim and the perpetrator of finding and response, if the finding is that bullying occurred (specific information about discipline imposed on the perpetrator may not be disclosed to the families of the victim);

Investigation/Response completion date \_\_\_\_\_

Follow up to ensure that Response(s) to bullying are adequate will occur on \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of School official designated to conduct investigation and determine response (if someone other than the Head of School)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Head of School

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# Appendix Two - Transgender and Gender Identity Policy

## Introduction

As a gender-inclusive school, TAPA recognizes that gender impacts all students and will endeavor to interrupt binary notions of gender, normalize gender diversity, question limited portrayals of gender, support student self-reflection, and, above all else, teach empathy and respect. Consistent with federal, state, and local laws, it is the policy of TAPA, its administration, and its Board of Directors to provide an equal opportunity and safe environment for all students and employees, regardless of race, color, creed, national or ethnic origin, gender, genetic information, gender identification or expression, religion, disability, age, sexual orientation, marital status, citizenship status, or veteran status.

## Learning Environment

TAPA is committed to ensuring a safe and supportive learning environment for all students. It is committed to ensuring that all educational professionals and other school staff be supportive role models and strong advocates for the safety and well-being of students. All students need a safe and supportive school environment to progress academically and developmentally. The most specific purpose of this policy is to ensure that students who are transgender or gender non-conforming are provided with and ensured a safe school environment in which to continue to grow and develop while fostering social integration and minimizing stigmatization. Therefore, this policy shall endeavor to:

- Foster an educational environment that is safe and free from discrimination for all students, regardless of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression;
- Ensure compliance with state and federal law concerning bullying, harassment, and discrimination;
- Reduce the stigmatization of and improve educational integration of transgender and gender-nonconforming students, maintain the privacy of all students, and foster cultural competence and professional development for school staff; and
- Support healthy communication between educators and parent(s)/guardian(s) to further the successful educational development and well-being of every student.

## Definitions

The following definitions are not for the express purpose of labeling a student, but rather to provide common terminology and to assist in understanding this policy:

- “*Gender Identity*” describes a person’s deeply held sense or psychological knowledge of one’s own gender. One’s gender identity can be the same or different from the gender assigned at birth. All people have a gender identity. Gender identity is an innate, largely inflexible characteristic of each individual’s personality that is generally established at a very early age, although the age at which individuals come to understand and express their gender identity may vary.
- “*Gender Expression*” describes the manner in which a person represents or expresses one’s gender to others, often through behavior, clothing, hairstyles, activities, voice, or mannerisms.
- “*Gender Non-conforming*” describes people whose gender expression differs from stereotypical expectations, such as “feminine” boys, “masculine” girls, and those who are perceived as androgynous. This includes people who identify outside traditional gender categories or identify as both/neither gender.
- “*Cisgender*” describes a person whose personal identity and gender corresponds with the sex they were assigned at birth.
- “*Sexual Orientation*” describes a person’s romantic or sexual attraction to people of the same or opposite gender or multiple genders. Some common sexual orientations are straight, gay, lesbian,

bisexual, pansexual, queer, etc. A transgender or gender-nonconforming person can have a sexual orientation.

- “*Transgender*” describes a person whose gender identity or expression is different from that traditionally associated with an assigned sex at birth. Transgender is an umbrella term. A transgender male is someone who identifies as male but was assigned the sex of female at birth. A transgender female is someone who identifies as female, but was assigned the sex of male at birth
- “*Transition*” describes a process in which a person goes from living, identifying, and expressing oneself as one gender to living, identifying, and expressing oneself as another. Transition is a process that is different for everyone, and it may or may not involve social, legal or physical changes. There is no one step or set of steps that an individual must undergo in order to have their gender identity affirmed and respected. Transgender individuals may undergo transition at any stage of their lives, and gender transition can happen swiftly or over a long duration of time.

Critically, TAPA recognizes that terminology and language describing individuals who are transgender may differ based on region, ethnicity, age or culture. Persons who identify as transgender or gender non-conforming may use a number of words and expressions to describe their lives and experiences. Examples include but are not limited to: trans, transsexual, transgender, male-to-female, female-to-male, bigender, agender, and gender-neutral. Similarly, transgender or gender non-conforming students may use general neutral pronouns to identify themselves, including, for example, they/them/their in the singular form; Ze (instead of he/she/they); and Hir (instead of him/his/her/hers/they/theirs) A general recommendation is to avoid assumptions and employ the term that the student uses to describe themselves.

### **Education and Training**

In order to foster a safe and supportive school environment for all students, TAPA shall strive to incorporate education and training about transgender and gender non-conforming students into its curriculum, training, and professional development whenever possible This may include but is not limited to:

- Terms, concepts, and current developmental understandings of gender identity, gender expression, and gender diversity in children and adolescents;
- Developmentally appropriate strategies for communication about issues related to gender identity and gender expression that protect student privacy;
- Reinforcements of developmentally appropriate strategies for preventing and intervening in bullying incidents, including cyberbullying;
- Access to resources regarding transgender students and gender identity.

### **Acceptance**

TAPA shall accept a student or employee’s assertion of their gender identity. The intentional or persistent refusal to respect an individual’s gender identity is a violation of this policy and may result in disciplinary action.

### **Privacy and Confidentiality**

All TAPA students have the right to keep private one’s transgender status or gender non-conforming expression at school. Students have the ability to discuss and express their gender identity and expression openly and decide when, with whom, and how much of their private information to share with others.

Information about a student, including assigned birth sex, name change for gender identity purposes, gender transition, medical or mental health treatment related to gender identity, or any other information of a similar nature, shall be maintained in confidence by TAPA.

Only TAPA personnel with a legitimate educational or medical need should have access to a student's records or other information contained in those records.

TAPA personnel shall not disclose information that may reveal an individual's gender identity, transgender status, and/or gender non-conforming presentation to persons other than that particular student, including that student's parents (other than a student's own parents or guardians if the student has yet to attain the age of 18), other students, volunteers, and other school personnel unless legally required to do so or unless the student has explicitly authorized such disclosure.

When contacting the parent or guardian of a student who is transgender or gender non-conforming, school personnel should use the student's legal name and the pronoun corresponding to the student's gender assigned at birth unless the student, parent, or guardian has specified otherwise. However, TAPA employees should first speak with the student before discussing that student's gender non-conformity or transgender status with that student's parent(s) or guardian(s).

### **Official Records**

TAPA is required to maintain a mandatory permanent pupil record that includes a student's legal name and legal gender. However, TAPA is not required to use a student's legal name and gender on other school records or documents. TAPA will change a student's official record to reflect a change in legal name and/or legal gender only upon receipt of documentation that such change has been made through legal means. The documentation required for a legal change of name and/or gender is a court order or federally issued document demonstrating the student's new name.

TAPA shall collect or maintain information about students' gender only when necessary. In situations where school staff or administrators are required by law to use or to report a student's legal name or gender, such as for purposes of standardized testing, school staff and administrators shall adopt practices to avoid the inadvertent disclosure of such confidential information.

Requests from former students to change their name and gender on school records shall be handled in the same manner as current students. To the extent that TAPA is not legally required to use a former student's legal name or gender on school records and other documents, TAPA shall use the name and gender preferred by the former student. In addition, transgender students who transition after having completed high school, have the right to request that TAPA amend school records, such as, a diploma or transcript that include the student's birth name and gender. When requested by the student, TAPA shall amend the student's record, including reissuing a high school diploma or transcript, to reflect the student's current name and gender.

### **Names and Pronouns**

A student has the right to be addressed by a name and pronoun that corresponds to the student's gender identity. For TAPA to recognize and use a student's preferred name and/or pronouns for unofficial purposes (e.g., in the classroom, in the hallways, at school-related events, etc.), a court-ordered name or gender change is not required, and the student need not change one's official records.



TAPA staff shall privately ask the student at the beginning of the school year how the student would like to be addressed in class, in correspondence to the home, or at conferences with the student's parent or guardian. TAPA staff shall not engage in discussions with a student concerning that student's preferred name and/or pronouns, unless and until that student has informed that staff member of that student's preferred gender identity.

### **Participation and Activities**

Students shall be permitted to participate in any such activities or conform to any such rule, policy, or practice consistent with their gender identity. As a general matter, TAPA should evaluate all gender-based activities, rules, policies, and practices and maintain only those that have a clear and sound pedagogical purpose.

### **Dress**

Students shall have the right to dress in accordance with their gender identity, within the parameters of the dress code adopted by TAPA. TAPA staff shall not enforce a dress code more strictly against transgender or gender non-conforming students than other students. Dress codes shall be general statements that ensure the proper dress for all students.

### **Restrooms, Locker Rooms and Changing Facilities**

All students are entitled to have access to restrooms, locker rooms and changing facilities that are sanitary, safe, and adequate, so they can fully engage in their school program and activities. In meeting with the transgender student and parent to discuss the issues outlined in this policy, it is essential that the building leadership work collaboratively with the student to address the student's access to the restrooms, locker room, and changing facilities. Each situation needs to be reviewed and addressed based on the particular circumstances of the student and the school facilities.

In all cases, the building leadership should be clear with the student and the student's parents or guardians that the student may access the restroom, locker room, and changing facility that corresponds to the student's gender identity. Students who refuse to use a gender-segregated restroom are to be provided with a safe and adequate alternative, such as a gender-neutral restroom. Similarly, students who refuse to use a locker room or changing facility that corresponds to the student's gender identity are to be provided with a safe and adequate alternative.

Some students may feel uncomfortable with a fellow student who is transgender or gender-nonconforming using the same gender-segregated restroom, locker room, or changing facility. This discomfort is not a reason to deny access to the student who is transgender or gender non-conforming. A student who refuses to use a restroom, locker room, or changing facility for these reasons also is to be provided with a safe and adequate alternative. TAPA administrators and counseling staff are encouraged to work with students to address the discomfort and to foster understanding of diversity, including gender identity, to create a school culture that respects and values all individuals.

### **Physical Education and Athletics**

All students shall be permitted to participate in physical education classes and intramural sports in a manner consistent with their gender identity. According to the Rhode Island Interscholastic Athletic Association Rules and Regulation, all students are permitted to participate in activities in a manner consistent with their gender identity.