

## **TAG Magnet Expansion FAQ**

### **How many new students were accepted to TAG this year?**

150 freshmen were offered admission to TAG this year.

### **Why was the number of 150 freshmen chosen, as opposed to another number?**

150 was chosen in order for us to keep the same ratios of students to teachers in individual classes. By adding 75 students, we essentially added 3 sections of each of the freshmen courses. This is the same ratio that we currently hold at TAG and this will allow us to grow while maintaining the same student-to-teacher ratio.

### **Why were parents of current students and prospective parents/students not informed of this decision earlier?**

The concept of expanding TAG has been under consideration for a few years; however, the decision to expand with this particular class was made at the district level in the weeks leading up to admission letters being mailed. The district did consult with us on what made sense and what didn't make sense with regards to the expansion to ensure that we could expand with fidelity without compromise to the program.

### **Will the quality of students accepted to TAG be lowered with a larger number of accepted students?**

No. As has been the case in previous years, due to the district's magnet acceptance process, we select students by feeder patterns, not always by the highest scores across the district. This means there may be situations where students with higher scores get waitlisted while other students in different feeder patterns may be accepted with lower scores. All of these students must meet the acceptance criteria, regardless of higher or lower scores, and are all highly qualified to attend TAG.

### **What are the benefits to expanding TAG?**

There are many advantages to expanding TAG. First, we have a lot of highly qualified applicants who are not able to gain admission, despite being qualified, simply because of the size of the school. This expansion will give qualified students who want to attend TAG a better chance to do so. Second, it allows for us to offer more electives and curricular offerings that we haven't been able to offer in the past. Finally, it helps to reduce the burden on our current staff who currently teach 2 – 6 different courses and take on 2 – 5 different clubs, by adding staff to help in those roles.

### **Will class sizes increase?**

No, the district has increased our teacher allotment in proportion to the size of enrollment. There should be no change to the student teacher ratio. In fact, class sizes will likely be more balanced than they have in the past because scheduling evenly becomes easier with more teachers.

### **Will faculty quality decrease?**

No, this expansion was decided before prime hiring season and we've already begun our comprehensive search for excellent teachers. We've made two recommendations for hire already and look forward to introducing our newest TAG faculty members as soon as hiring is finalized.

**Will college access suffer with a larger graduating class?**

No. Colleges and universities across the country know TAG and the caliber of curriculum we have and the quality of the graduates we produce. Colleges are already clamoring for TAG students and colleges do not “cap” the number of students they accept for any one high school.

**Will we be able to keep the programs and curriculum that make TAG special?**

Yes. Not only will we be able to keep the curriculum that makes TAG special, we’re looking to re-envision and enhance our offerings. We at TAG have been looking to institute four gifted & talented seminars over the course of four years at TAG, but have never had the personnel or resources to make this a reality. With more resources and personnel, we have the ability to offer a wide variety of electives and TAG curricular programs that we haven’t been able to offer in the past.

**What will happen to TREK and TAG-IT?**

TREK and TAG-IT are core elements to the TAG experience and will carry on as such. While the structure of TREK may need to change somewhat to accommodate a larger class size, the elements that make it valuable – students tasked with solving complex problems while working with peers – will remain at the core. We don’t expect TAG-IT to change very much as with more students, come more teachers, and more TAG-IT offerings!

**How will our college counseling department handle this increased load?**

Our college counseling department will expand with the growth of the school. Currently, Ms. Marberry is our only college counselor. In addition to Ms. Marberry, we have Mr. Padierna, our college access partner, who assists as a resource to students and parents. While we will not hire an additional counselor this year, we will be allocated and hiring an additional counselor before this 150 student class would become seniors.

**How will this expansion impact clubs and academic competitions?**

We expect that this increase will increase the amount of clubs we’re able to offer, as we will be adding more staff to help sponsor clubs. We also believe the quality of our academic competition teams will increase. Currently, TAG competes in academic competitions at the level of a 6A school, even though we only have 275 students. With an increase in students, we’ll have more students who are passionate and excited to take part in academic competitions and clubs, and we’ll have more coaches to share the load in terms of sponsoring and coaching clubs and competitions.

**Is there enough space to expand at Townview next year?**

Yes, there is enough space for this expansion next year. The district has verified the capacity of the building and next year we (Townview) will expand to the capacity. There are classrooms that are currently not being used as classrooms that would be converted and we are already in planning process for making sure our systems work with regards to the lunchroom, gym, theater, and other shared spaces.

**I have ideas, will I be able to get involved with the planning process?**

Yes! We will have a committee of parents and community members who have ideas and want to be a part of the expansion planning as we move forward. There will be plenty of opportunities to get involved and those will be shared out through the PTSA and the school communication.

*Have other questions that haven’t been answered? Submit them [here](#)!*