



A Community of Caring and Excellence
"Take Care of Yourself, Take Care of Each Other, Take Care of This Place"

Parents' F.A.Q.'S

Please read the complete updated TMS Handbook with your middle school student. The handbook includes important information regarding all school policies and procedures. District policies can be found on the TPS website. A link to the TMS handbook can be found on the middle school's website: www.ms.tenafly.k12.nj.us

ATTENDANCE – Absences, lateness and early dismissal

- **My child will be absent?**

Please report student full name, grade, duration of absence and reason for being out, in advance of the absence. All absences must be verified. Please call the TMS attendance line: 201-816-4900, option 2 as early as possible. Students who are not verified are may be considered truant.

- **My child is or will be late?**

Students must be in their **homeroom classroom by 8:27AM**. Otherwise, late students must sign in at the main office. Drop off between 8:00-8:15 to allow time for your child to go to their locker and walk to their HR. If a student comes in after 8:50 a.m., the parent/guardian should leave a message on the attendance line with reason for the lateness or provide the student with a note. If he or she does not have a note or a call has not been made to the attendance line, the parent/guardian will be called and should verify with the attendance secretary why the student is late.

- **I need to have my child excused early?**

To expedite this process, the parent/guardian must write a note with the child's full name, dismissal time, and reason for the early dismissal. Your child should bring this note to the main office during homeroom. He/she will be given an **early dismissal pass** and will meet you at the main office at the designated time. Parent/guardian must come into the main office to sign your child out of school.

If the student returns to school on the same day they may sign themselves back in. The student must report directly to the main office using the field entrance closest to Tenafly Road. Signing back in is imperative to student safety and will enable the student to receive the appropriate credit for the school day.

- **I want to request homework?**

If your child has been absent for 2 or more days, you may phone Mrs. Violick in the Guidance Office @ 201-816-4922 before 9:30 AM to request homework. Work may be picked up after 3:00 PM at the designated area outside of the Guidance office. Please be sure to pick up requested assignments.

HEALTH

- **My child is unable to physically participate in physical education, how do I notify the school?**

Doctor's notes excusing students from physical activity must be handed in directly to the nurse (not the P.E. teacher) during homeroom. Students will receive a blue note from the nurse that must be shown to the P.E. teacher, coaches and recess teacher, if applicable. An alternate assignment will be given to students who are excused from P.E.

If a student is able to participate on a limited basis, it must be explained in writing. The teacher will modify physical activity, if appropriate.

An excuse note extending three days may not be from a parent. Extended excuse notes must come from a doctor.

All doctor's and parent's notes must include:

- the date
- student's name
- reason for the excuse from physical activity

- **My child is in school and not feeling well. How does he/she go home?**

Students who become ill during the school day must report to the Health Office after receiving a pass from their classroom teacher. If the nurse decides that the student is too ill to remain in school, she will telephone the student's parents/guardians and ask them to pick up the student. For safety reasons, all illnesses must be reported to the nurse. Students may not call home to report an illness unless it is permitted by the nurse. Using a cell phone during school hours will earn detention, as per school policy.

- **My child has a specific health issue?**

Please be sure to communicate all relevant health concerns in with the school utilizing the appropriate paperwork. This include medical excuse notes, field trips forms and athletic participation forms. We encourage you to communicate with our school nurse: Mrs. Russenberger 201-816-4937. If your concern applies to a specific class or activity, please be sure to notify the teacher or coach that is supervising your child.

PHONE

- **My child wants to bring his/her cell phone or other electronics to school?**

TMS requires all students turn off their cell phones and keep them in their lockers for the duration of the school day and when participating in all extracurricular activities. Cell phones and other electronics such as tablets, laptops and e-readers have become an integral tool for time management and communication. Unfortunately, they also disrupt instruction, distract students and provide opportunities for inappropriate use of technology. Personal technology is not to be used during school activities for personal recordings, messaging or to access personal social media accounts. **There is a phone available in the main office for student use.**

LUNCH

- **My child doesn't have any money left in his/her lunch account or forgets his lunch or lunch money?**

Students may purchase 2 school lunches on credit. They may not use a siblings' or a friends' account. **Parents/guardians are strongly discouraged from dropping off lunches.** Food deliveries from restaurants are not permitted. If you choose to drop of a forgotten lunch, you will need to be buzzed into the building first. Lunches may be left on the table immediately on the right, inside the door. Lunches must be clearly marked with the student's name and grade. A lunch aide will pick the lunches up and bring them to the cafeteria.

Students are not contacted from the office to be informed that a lunch has been dropped off for them. Please do not drop off anything other than lunches at this table. Students are not allowed to pick up any item from this table. Items that are placed on table that are not lunches, may end up in the lost or confiscated.

- **I want to add money to my child's lunch account?**

A link to information and instructions on the cafeteria's pre-paid options can be found on the middle school's website under "Lunch Information." (www.ms.tenafly.k12.nj.us)

FORGOTTEN ITEMS

- **My child forgets his violin, book, homework etc.?**

Students must show up to school prepared for their entire school day. **Parents or caregivers are not allowed to drop off any forgotten items for students.** No books, homework, projects, instruments, gym clothes, supplies, cell phones or other items are to be dropped off at any time. When a student forgets something that they need for school, we see this as an opportunity for them to learn and take responsibility for themselves. The only exception for drop off is items needed for medical reasons or forgotten lunches.

LOST AND FOUND

- **My child has lost something?**

Students are encouraged to use and to lock their lockers. Ask your child to retrace his/her steps and to speak to each of his/her teachers. Students should regularly check the Lost & Found table located in the cafeteria near the windows. Valuables are stored in the main office. An additional lost & found box is located in each of the gym offices. At the end of each marking period, all found clothing will be donated to charity. Students should not bring valuables, toys, or excess money to school. Label your child's clothing so they may be identified and returned.

RESOURCES

- **My child is having difficulty with his schoolwork?**

Visit the teacher's website on the TMS website. Teachers post homework, strategies, resources, and opportunities and times for them to come for extra help. Encourage your child to speak to their teacher(s). Your child could also visit with their guidance counselor. The Guidance Office has information about tutoring opportunities and the THS after school Homework club.

- **What is the best way to contact my child's teacher?**

Teachers will communicate the best way to reach them during Back to School Night. You can also find office hours, extra help sessions, and email address listed on the teacher's web page. Send the teacher an email. You can expect a response within 24 hours when school is in session.

- **I would like a meeting with my child's team or an individual teacher?**

First, contact the teacher or team leader for your child's team. Many times things can be resolved over a phone call or an emailed communication. If you still feel that you need to make an appointment, contact the team leader or Mrs. Violick in Guidance at rviolick@tenafly.k12.nj.us or at 201-816-4922.

- **My child is having difficulty with a specific teacher?**

Teaching your child how to respectfully approach a teacher and what to say can be an invaluable skill that will last a lifetime! Practice/Role play so they can be sure to leave the meeting with what they need. Teaching your child to advocate for his/herself will help them to learn independence. If the student can resolve the situation on their own, great! If not, the next step would be for you to reach out to the teacher directly. Still not resolved? The third step would be to contact your child's guidance counselor. In all circumstances, communication is key!

- **My child is feeling overwhelmed, confused, or unhappy about school and/or there is something going on at home that I would like the school to know about?**

Contact your child's School Guidance Counselor or the team leader for your child's team.

- **My child is having difficulty with another student(s)?**

Middle school can be a turbulent time emotionally and socially. Sometimes it's most appropriate to give it a little breathing room. Children learn to navigate and are more resilient than sometimes we allow. Depending on the circumstances, feel free to reach out to your child's teacher(s), school counselor, or administration. If it's a matter of safety, please do not hesitate.

CLUBS/CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES/ATHLETICS

- **What clubs or co-curricular activities are offered at TMS?**

Students may sign up for more than one activity. Many of the clubs allow you to you may join at any time. Students should read the list of clubs posted on our website. All students are encouraged to attend the club fair in September to find out more about the requirements and time commitments for each activity. It is great for your child to be involved, but they shouldn't over commit. There is no activity fee for middle school clubs/teams.

Athletic teams require additional requirements and commitment. Late sign ups may not be permitted. Athletic participation forms are on Tenafly Athletics page and are due prior to the season starting. For detailed information on all athletics offered at TMS and for information on the registration process, please visit the Tenafly athletics home page: www.tenaflytigers.org