



## 2014-2015 School Profile

### Visit us!

**Campus Address:**  
26720 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue South  
Kent, WA 98032  
**Front Office:** 253.945.5187  
**Fax:** 253.945.5191  
**CEEB Code:** 480559

**TAF Academy Principal:** Paul Tytler  
**FWPS Executive Director of Secondary Education:**  
Vince Blauser  
**TAF Executive Director:** Trish Millines-Dziko  
**TAF Education Director:** Chris Alejano  
**School Website:** [www.fwps.org/taf](http://www.fwps.org/taf)  
**FWPS:** <http://www.fwps.org/>  
**TAF:** <http://www.techaccess.org/>

### Our Mission

*TAF Academy is a 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade public neighborhood school with a mission to prepare every student for college and for life through a science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) focused curriculum. Our goal is to enlist students as active participants in their education and help them cultivate a keen awareness of their important role in the world.*

### Our Community

We are situated in Kent, Washington, between the campuses of Totem Middle School and Star Lake Elementary school.

TAF Academy is a part of Federal Way Public Schools (FWPS) district. FWPS strives to provide quality instruction every day, every moment, for every child within its reach. *From implementing standards-based learning to providing comprehensive professional development and coaching for instructional staff, FWPS is a leader in continuous innovation among public schools state- and nation-wide.*

*TAF Academy is co-managed by FWPS and TAF, a nonprofit that is a leader in STEM education. TAF is passionate about creating better outcomes in STEM disciplines for underserved students. Everything we do is to contribute to our students' success.*

The district provides facilities and the per-student state funding, and works with TAF on hiring and school operations. TAF provides additional resources including the innovative academic model that powers the curriculum; program management for college readiness, STEM integration, education technologies and internships; mentoring resources; the technology needed to support TAF Academy's STEM focus; and links to local businesses, volunteers, colleges and the community.

### Our School

TAF Academy was established in 2008 to provide a rigorous, relevant learning environment for today's college-bound student. There are no barriers to entry or retention. Our small, public school setting reflects what researchers know about small schools—that they tend to positively impact student achievement, behavior and attendance.

TAF Academy strives to create self-empowered agents who will work for social equity. Teachers, administrators, parents, and community members work together to meet our shared goal of success for each TAF Academy student. The school was selected as an **Intel School of Distinction** in recognition of our excellent program in middle school math, a **Washington State School of Distinction** two consecutive years for being in the top 5% of schools in terms of improvement in math and reading scores, and designated as a **Washington State Innovation School** by the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

To date, TAF's three senior classes have recorded a 98% on time graduation rate, 96% college acceptance rate and, 81% college attendance rate.

## Schedule

The school day is organized around a 4 x 4 block schedule of 90 minute periods. Having a block schedule enables us to implement project-based learning effectively; it gives students more time to delve deeply into each aspect of their projects. TAF Academy has a rotating drop schedule to facilitate school-wide learning and community building around the following themes: Wellness and Fitness, Community Forums, and College and Career Readiness. Drop schedule activities occur three times per month and incorporate the entire student body.

Through our special “X-Block” middle school students have an opportunity to receive onsite tutoring in math and reading, foreign language instruction in Chinese and Japanese and STEM exploration.

## Standards-based Education

FWPS has implemented standards-based education in its schools. Accordingly, each lesson taught at TAF Academy is connected to a standard and a learning target. Students know in advance what they need to learn, and they have more than one opportunity to show they have met the required standards. Grades reflect whether a student is above, at, or below mastery of a standard. TAF Academy has been using this system since it opened in 2008.

## Methodologies

TAF Academy’s academic philosophy incorporates:

- **Authentic Intellectual Work (AIW)** - Students do real-world projects that require higher-order thinking, deep understanding of content, and communication skills.
- **Project-Based Learning (PBL)** - Students use classroom projects and selected technology to research questions and issues that are relevant to their lives.
- **STEM Integration** - In this model, academic content from all areas—science, mathematics, social sciences, and the fine, performing and language arts—is integrated into projects and instruction
- **College Readiness** - Students are considered “college-ready” when they are aware college is a viable option; eligible for college based on coursework completed; and ready to take college-level classes.

## Curriculum

TAF Academy’s curriculum is focused on the core disciplines of science, math, language arts, and social studies, and aims to aid students’ mastery of concepts deriving from science, technology, engineering, and math. This includes STEM concepts like scientific processes, collaboration, and analytical thinking. We use an interdisciplinary Project Based Learning (**PBL**) model, wherein students complete projects that build on knowledge from multiple subject areas to solve real-world problems every day.

High school sciences include biology, chemistry, physics, and engineering; math includes algebra, geometry, pre-calculus and calculus. Language arts and social studies are combined into grade-level humanities courses. Electives include digital art, Chinese, and Japanese. Students have an opportunity to explore their field of interest through independent STEM research.

TAF Academy classes meet district and national standards, and courses cover concepts and skills in line with the district’s curriculum. One of TAF Academy’s core values is learning beyond the classroom; we believe student learning cannot be measured by the time students spend in their seats during the school day. Toward that end, we create opportunities for students to gain credits through internships, independent study, college courses, and community service.

Technology plays a significant role in our students’ education. Each student has a laptop during the school day. Students use a variety of tools such as Microsoft Office for writing and presentations, WordPress, and Moodle to share information, document cameras to capture images, and SMART Boards to make every lesson interactive.

Students participate in four exhibitions per year. These are public events in which students display what they’ve learned in completing their class projects. Families and community members attend exhibitions, help assess student work, and serve as an “authentic audience” that gives constructive feedback. Seniors complete a senior project that demonstrates their ability to plan, design, and implement rigorous, independent research and business communications. This is a student’s final expression of who he or she is and what kind of learner and member of society he or she would like to become.

# Special Features

*We offer innovative programs, supports and opportunities for students, including but not limited to:*

**Extended Learning Opportunities (ELOs).** These unique out-of-class experiences supplement student learning and spark engagement around STEM fields. ELOs include field expeditions, after school academic support and enrichment, career resources, and exposure to real-world professionals in STEM fields. Among other opportunities, students sail and conduct marine science projects in the annual Salish Sea Expedition and participate in our Learning AFAR Global Explorer trip to Costa Rica, for students who demonstrate leadership potential as well as academic success.

**Teacher-Scientist Partnerships (TSP).** This nationally-recognized, award-winning program supports meaningful, inspirational connections between STEM professionals, teachers, and students with a demonstrated interest in STEM fields. Unique learning experiences such as classes taught by STEM professionals, internships and job shadows, on-location and virtual workshops, and more, help students learn skills that prepare them for roles as community leaders and STEM professionals. Companies participating in the TSP program include Microsoft Corporation, IBM, The Boeing Company, Spring Creek Group, Avanade, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, Casey Family Programs and FrontRunner Labs.

**Internships.** Internships are sustained, authentic experiences outside of the classroom, guided by field area experts that develop or build on a set of specific skills. Most internships fall into one or more of the following categories: math and computer science, engineering, physical science, behavioral and social science, environmental science, and life science. For select students, we also have a year-round study and internship program with the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle.

**College Readiness.** College and Career Readiness is a core part of our school culture. Our principal, teachers, parents, and students work together to build a culture of success with an emphasis on post-secondary education. We engage colleges and universities around how we can best prepare our students for a successful transition to college. We also provide parent/student workshops, college visits (including a Summer College Tour), and direct support with college applications. We aim to ensure that every TAF Academy student is college aware, college eligible, college prepared, and thus college ready.

**Academic and After-School Programs and Clubs.** Students participate in and develop their own engaging after-school and out-of-school programs and clubs, like Chinese Club (Mandarin), Japanese Club, Soccer, Dance, Drama, Digital Communications, Chess, Math Club, Competitive Speech, and Fine Arts.

## OUR TEACHERS

**No. classroom teachers:** 17

**Avg. yrs. experience:** 5.8

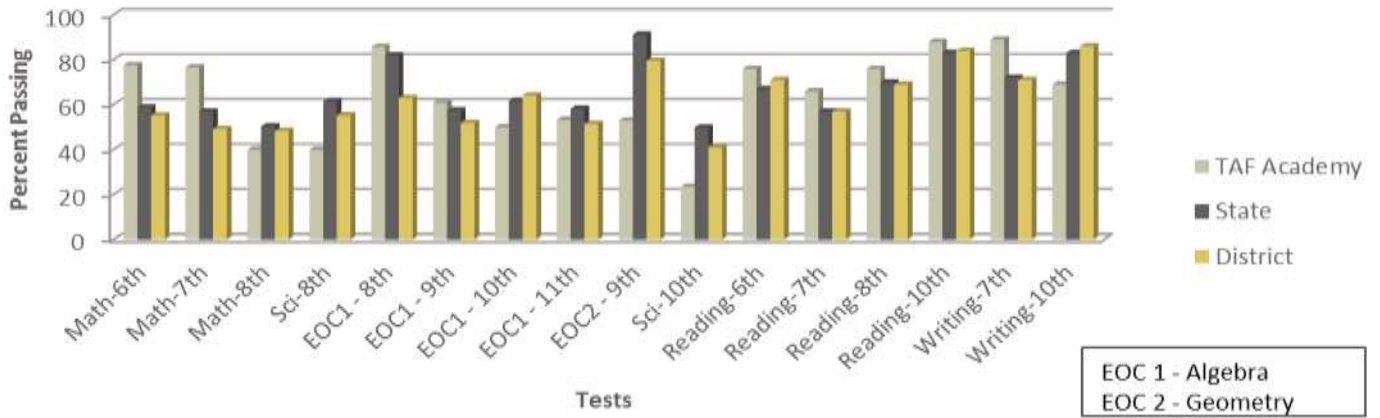
**Teachers with a min. of a master's degree:** 64.7%

**43% of TAF's teachers are teachers of color.**

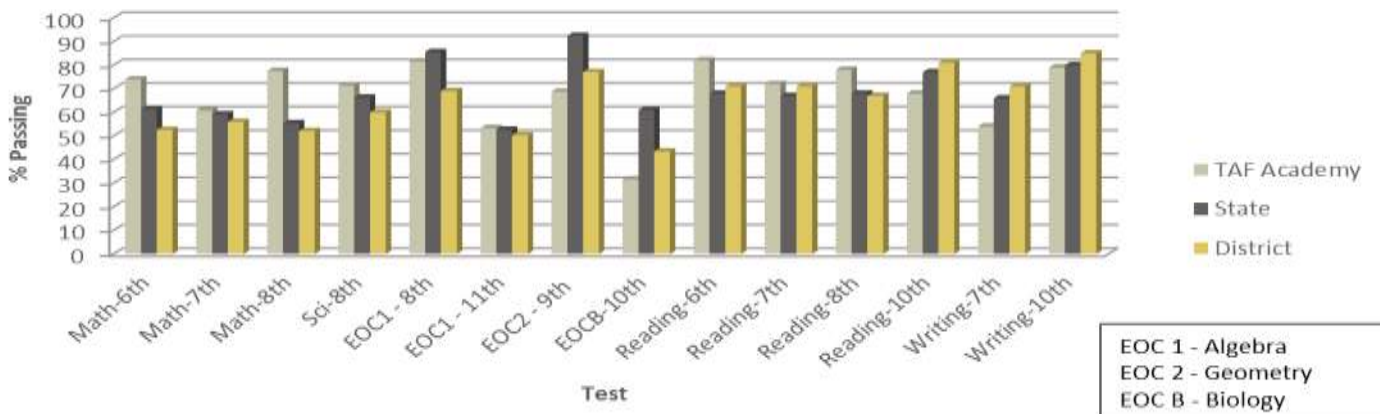
Gender	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Male	59%	54%	56%	58%
Female	41%	46%	44%	42%
Ethnicity				
African American	17.6%	15.7%	15.2%	14%
Asian/Pacific Islander	13.2%	14.5%	13.5%	27%
Hispanic	22%	20.4%	23.8%	23%
Native American	0.5%	0.9%	1.6%	2%
White	37.1%	36.6%	32.8%	33%
Multi-Racial/Other	9.6%	11.9%	13.1%	1%
Other				
Number of Students (as of Nov. 1)	205	235	244	263
Free/Reduced-price Meals	50.7%	49.8%	57.8%	49%
ELL/Transitional Bilingual	1.9%	2.5%	2%	4%
IEP	9.0%	7.6%	5.7%	7%

# Washington State Test Score Results

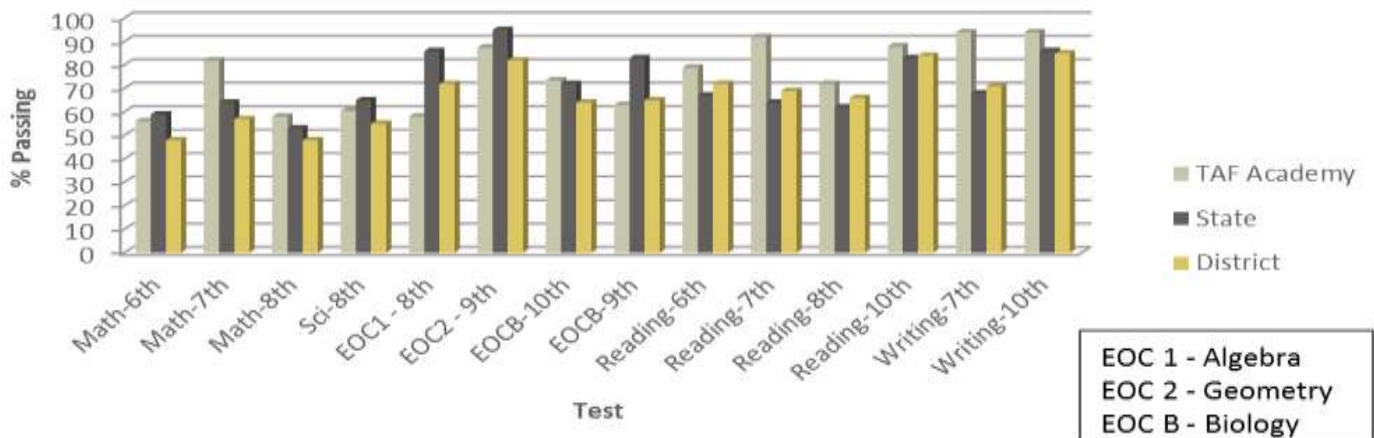
## TAF Academy 2011 Test Scores



## TAF Academy 2012 State Tests

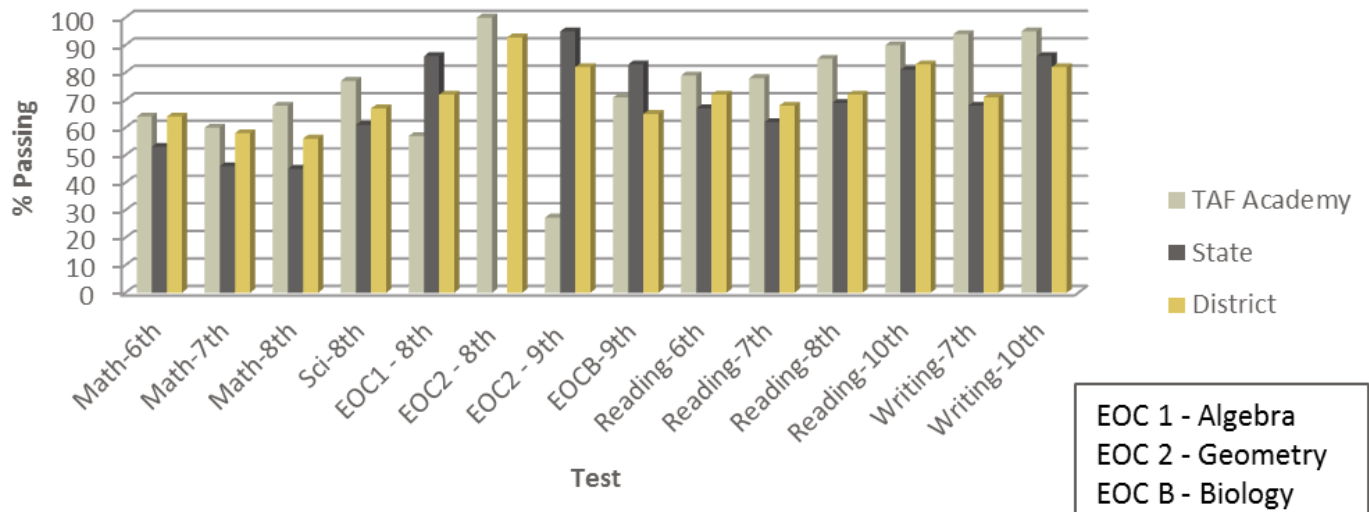


## TAF Academy 2013 State Tests



All TAF Academy 8<sup>th</sup> grade students take the EOC 1.

## TAF Academy 2014 State Tests



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