

# TALENT Tamil School

Ellicott City, Maryland

## Parent/Student Handbook



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## I. Parents Support

TALENT is a 100% volunteer-run organization. To maximize the teacher's effort and time, we kindly request that parents be fully involved in student's Tamil learning. We understand that students could not come to Tamil School when they are sick, or due to other commitments, or any family emergency. But otherwise, regular attendance will promote a sense of continuity and responsibility to the students themselves. Not missing classes will help students participate in classes as they will be familiar with lessons and have them participate without any hesitation and be more confident, which will help them to perform better.

Parents should remind students about their homework. Even older children tend to forget or don't take it seriously but with parent reminders, students can do homework regularly. As TALENT is striving towards achieving bi-literacy and eventually foreign language credit, we want all students to take various Tamil Virtual Academy (TVA) exams offered through TALENT. Not missing classes will have students tackle higher classes which gets harder progressively. Parents support, help and encouragement are needed for the student to persist through all grades.

Parents, please do not compare your children's progress with other students but continue to be positive and encourage them to do better. If a student is having a hard time learning and finishing up homework, please reach out to the class teacher, assistant teacher or other staff for suggestions that will work for your child.

## II. Communication

**TALENT school "Admins"** communications are sent via email as "Weekly Updates" on Thursdays. In case of additional or immediate communication, then another email will be sent.

**TALENT school “PTA”** communications are sent via email on Wednesdays. PTA email will comprise of Tamil community events that are happening around Maryland, Virginia, and DC areas. This communication is for students and Tamil community benefit. TALENT does not sponsor or endorse these events. If there are events that could involve bringing a guest to benefit our TALENT students, then TALENT will work with the guest or organization to plan for the event.

**TALENT teachers** will be communicating via both email and WhatsApp. Whatsapp will be used for quick communications. Whatsapp should only be used for communication and not be for conversations and no postings not related to class activities. If the message is sensitive please call and talk to the teachers.

Parents can contact admins, PTA, and teachers with questions regarding emails that they are receiving.

### **III. School Timings**

TALENT class timings for all Nilai’s are from 7.15 pm - 8.45 pm. Students are expected to be in the class by 7:10 pm to start the class promptly at 7.15 pm.

Children in Nilai 4 - Nilai 10 will come to the lobby by themselves once the class is over. Children in Nilai 1 - Nilai 3 will be guided by the teacher/assistant teacher or parent volunteer to the lobby.

Parents should not go into the classrooms during school hours unless the teachers have invited them. If a student needs to leave early, then the parent should have notified the teacher ahead of time.

Once the classes are dismissed promptly leave the school premises. Please don’t linger around to chat or socialize. Students get restless and start playing. It's unsafe for students to run around the school and near the parking lot.

#### IV. Curriculum and Exams

TALENT Nilai's 1 to 8 follow curriculum set up by TAC (TALENT Academic Council). Up to Nilai 8, all exam test papers are prepared by TALENT teachers in collaboration with TAC. Passing and promoting criteria are set by TAC. In an academic year, two exams are conducted for most of the Nilais, one during winter and another one during summer. The grades from both the exams, homework and quizzes, will be counted for promotion to the next Nilai. Testing criteria will include both written and oral.

After Nilai 8, students will pursue curriculum from TVA (Tamilnadu Virtual Academy) in TVA Intermediate, TVA Advanced, and TVA HG 10 to be eligible for attaining the "Seal of Biliteracy". In addition to that above students have to take an oral exam (currently conducted by The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL)). The written test papers are sent to TVA for grading and students will receive their scores from TVA.

#### V. Attendance Policy

Students who have 100% attendance are rewarded with attendance trophy on the Annual day. While 100% attendance is encouraged, we do understand that the student might miss school due to a variety of reasons. In all these situations, please do let your teachers know ahead of time and make sure the students catch up with the class and homework. We understand that some students are highly motivated with attendance, but please do not send them to school when they are sick. Please inform the class teacher regarding sickness. Students who are late to class will be marked tardy, which will affect the student's attendance.

#### VI. Classroom and Hallway Etiquette

**No food or drinks of any form is allowed inside the school/classrooms.** In Patapsco middle school, some classrooms have been marked green, which means that the students in that class have an airborne allergies, so absolutely no food. Also, please make sure to keep the water bottles outside the classroom. Parents may not be allowed

inside the class when school is in session unless requested by the teacher. This will help the children to focus better, and the classroom parent volunteers who are allowed to be inside the classroom will assist the children.

Parents should not be in the hallways waiting for the child at any given time. To run the school smoothly, TALENT highly encourages parents to wait in the lobby/Parents Room area. Parents can only be in the reserved Parents Room area. They cannot be in any other unreserved classrooms, library, and any other school facility area. Please avoid congregating inside the school building and practice common courtesy wherever applicable.

## **VII. Parking**

In Patapsco middle school, parking is limited. Please carpool as much as possible.

Parents consider dropping off the older children near the entrance and picking them up after the class. Always use caution when you drive inside the school premises and follow the directions given by the Parking Committee volunteers. There will be other events going on at the school regularly and be mindful of traffic outside and inside. Please refrain from parking in the designated area for primary teachers and staff. There are ~100 parking spots, and the school has a long driveway, so, 30-40 additional parallel parking can be done, and please don't park near the STOP sign. Park to the right side of the road in case of no parking spot available. Do not park on both sides of the road as that will cause traffic flow issues.

## **VIII. Volunteering Opportunities**

TALENT appreciates everyone who is dedicating their time to the school. TALENT needs more volunteers for the current academic year as we are planning to form different committees. These committees will support the school's effort in every possible way to make the school a better place for the children to learn. As a first step, TALENT now has the PTA committee. This year, the PTA committee will be responsible for events, competitions, volunteers, and other school-related works. A school-level competition is also on the plan so we could use as much help as possible. If you are willing to

volunteer, please send an email to the TALENT (TamilTalentUSA@gmail.com) or the PTA team (tamiltalentusa.pta@gmail.com).

## IX. Student Withdrawal and Refund Information

Parents may decide to withdraw students out of the TALENT School for different reasons. TALENT understands such a situation and refunds the fee amount based on the withdrawal month. If the student is withdrawn by the end of September, then a 100% refund will be given with the exception of TALENT bag and textbook fees, if applicable. If the student is withdrawn between October and November, then a \$50 service fee will be deducted from the refund. If the student is withdrawn between November and February, \$75 will be deducted from the refund amount. Please note that any student withdrawal requests after February will not be refunded. This is dealt with case by case basis and please reach out to admins for any concerns.

## X. Overview of the Do's and Don'ts-Please adhere

<b>Do</b> arrive on time for the class.	<b>Do not</b> arrive late to pick up the child.
<b>Do</b> wait until a teacher or parent volunteer arrives at the class when you drop your child/children in the classroom (Parents).	<b>Do not</b> let any child enter or stay in the class without the teacher's presence or any adult supervision.
<b>Do</b> take pictures of the arrangement of furniture in the classroom when you arrive and be sure it is arranged the same way when you leave (Teachers, Parent Volunteers).	<b>Do not</b> allow students to use or move any papers, books, and other public-school classroom materials and equipment. If the equipment is moved, please make sure they are in the original position before leaving the classroom.  <b>Do not</b> take pictures of classroom artifacts, students work on walls, etc. It is the property of HCPSS school and us TALENT do not have the privilege to take photos of those.

<p><b>Do</b> supervise kids always in classrooms, hallways, etc. (Teachers, Parent Volunteers, Parents).</p>	<p><b>Do not</b> allow the child to write on the boards without a teacher's supervision.</p>
<p><b>Do</b> park only in the designated parking spots. Parking in fire lanes and front of the facilities entrance should be avoided. Spaces reserved for TALENT team should not be used.</p>	<p><b>Do not</b> stand outside the classroom doors. Please wait in the parent waiting room area until the class disperses (Parents).</p>
<p><b>Do</b> use the parent waiting area while waiting for your children during school hours. (Parents).</p>	<p><b>Do not</b> bring any food within the school premises or leave any litter in the school premises (classrooms or lobby or waiting area).</p>