Freshman Presentation
Class of 2031

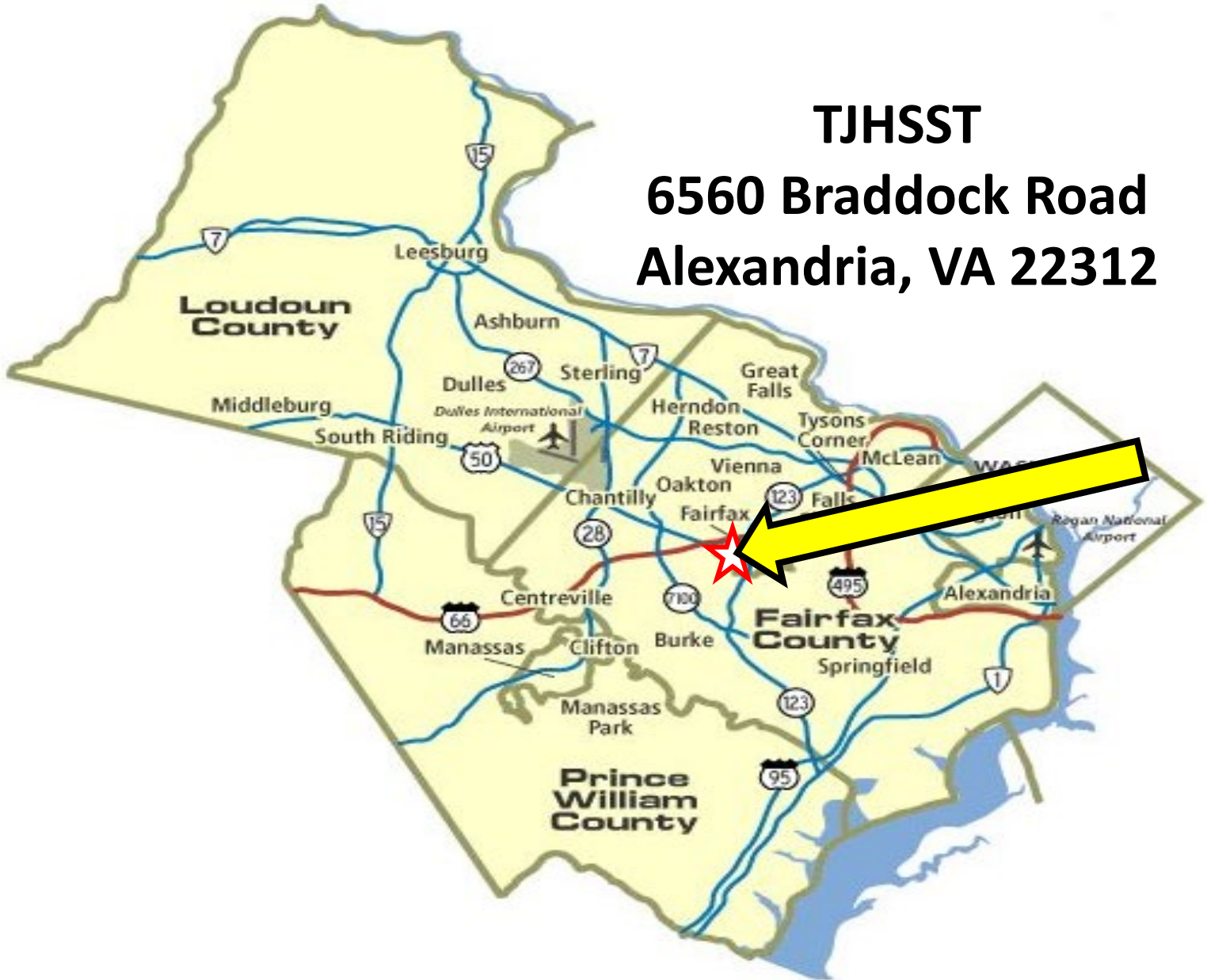
Agenda

- Overview of TJHSST
- The Freshman Admissions Process
    - Part I: Steps for Application
    - Part II: Writing Components
    - Part III: Selection Process
    - Calendar of Events
- Answers to FAQs

TJHSST Mission Statement

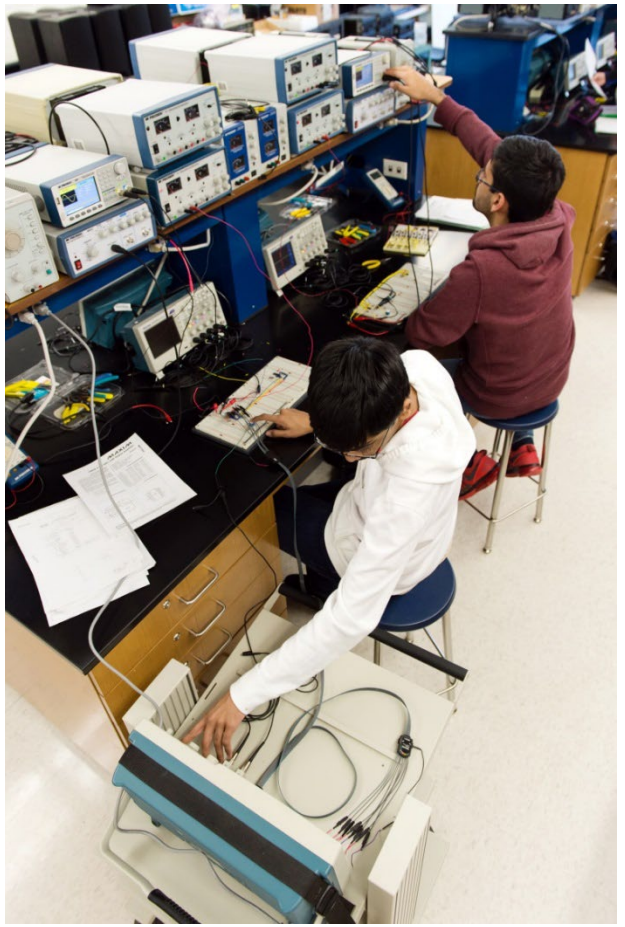
"The mission of Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology is to provide students a **challenging learning environment** focused on math, science, and technology, to **inspire joy at the prospect of discovery**, and to **foster a culture of innovation** based on ethical behavior and the shared interests of humanity."

TJHSST
6560 Braddock Road
Alexandria, VA 22312



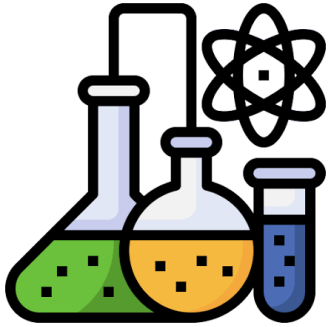
What Makes TJ Different?

- Regional Governor's School for Science and Technology
- Students apply to attend
- All courses taught on honors, AP, or post-AP level
- Research-based learning beginning in 9th grade that focuses on connecting ideas and creating flexible class time



Academic & STEM Curriculum

Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology



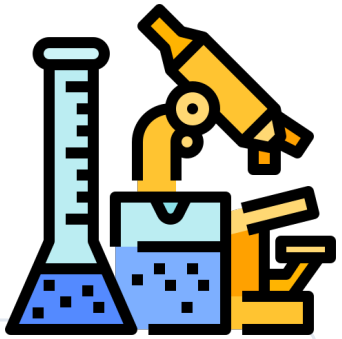
9th Grade IBET Program

Integrated Biology, English, & Tech (IBET) — An interdisciplinary block connecting core subjects through research-based learning.

- Flexible block scheduling for collaborative, high-impact group projects
- Hands-on scientific research integrated directly from freshman year
- Real-world application through structured field trips and data collection

Academic & STEM Curriculum

Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology



Senior Labs & Electives

Seniors complete extensive capstone research or mentorship practicums within **specialized research laboratories**.

Labs Include:

- Astronomy and Astrophysics
- Biotechnology and Life Sciences
- Chemical Analysis and Nanochemistry
- Computer Systems
- Engineering
- Mobile and Web Application Development
- Neuroscience
- Oceanography and Geophysical Systems
- Quantum Physics and Optics

More Than Research-Based Learning

- Complete High School Curriculum
- Math: Mathematics Flow Chart for TJ
- Electives offered in all subject areas
- Fine Arts and Performing Arts
- World languages

Eighth Period

- In-school activity period Wednesdays & Fridays
- Each week divided into four sections
- Over 180 clubs and activities such as Choir, Quiz Bowl, Rocketry
- Create your own!

TJHSST Extra-Curriculars

- Full complement of competitive VHSL teams
- Tradition of Success
- Fine and Performing Arts

Expectations If You Attend TJ

Diploma Requirements

TJ Advanced Studies Diploma requires 26 credits total:

- English (4), Math (4)
- Lab Science (4)
- History/Social Studies (4)
- World Language (3 consecutive)
- Health & PE (2)
- Fine Arts/CTE (1)
- Econ/Personal Finance (1)
- Electives (3)

Expectations If You Attend TJ

9th Grade Curriculum

The standard ninth-grade course of study includes:

- **IBET Integrated Program**
  Biology, English, and Technology/Design
- **Mathematics**
- **Health & Physical Education**
- **World Language**
- **One Elective Course**

Expectations If You Attend TJ

Course Flexibility

The STEM-focused curriculum at TJ offers limited flexibility due to rigorous core requirements and sequential course pathways.

Students must plan their academic journeys carefully to balance requirements and interests.

Please consult the official Course Planning Resources for mapping out options.

What is TJHSST Admissions looking for?

- ❑ Evidence of academic achievement in school
- ❑ Demonstration of 21st Century Skills (Portrait of a Graduate)
- ❑ Demonstration of genuine interest/curiosity/ creativity in STEM

Eligibility Requirements for FCPS

- ✓ 8th grade to apply for 9th grade
- ✓ Residency in a participating school division
  - ✓ Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, Prince William and City of Falls Church
- ✓ Honors Algebra I or higher in 8th Grade
- ✓ Honors Science
- ✓ One Additional Honors Course
- ✓ 3.5 GPA in core classes (grades typically A or A-)
    - ✓ No extra weighing for honors courses

Application Access

For additional information about the Freshman Application Process, scan the code or visit:
fcps.edu/tjhsst-admissions

Steps for Application

01

Student Portal Initiation

The student must log into the online application system FIRST before the parent can access the portal.

02

Parent Account Setup & Link

Once initiated, the parent receives an automated email link to create/log in to their parent account and fill out mandatory sections.

03

Liaison Counselor Verification

The middle school TJ Liaison Counselor verifies math course level.

04

Signature & Submission

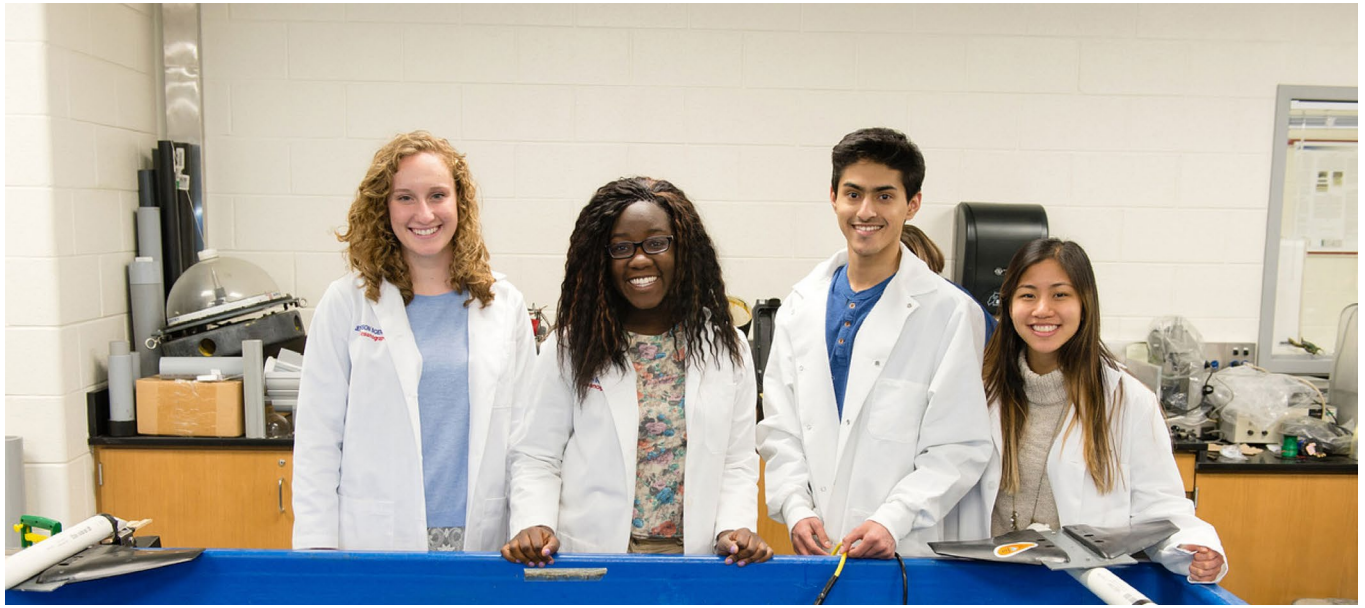
Both student and parent review Page 7 of the application and electronically sign and submit the application before the hard deadline on Oct 30 at 4:00 PM.

Parent and student will receive an auto-generated email confirming submission.

For additional information about the Freshman Application Process, scan the code or visit:

fcps.edu/tjhsst-admissions

TJHSST Freshman Application Process



TJHSST Class of 2031 (2026-2027 Applicants)

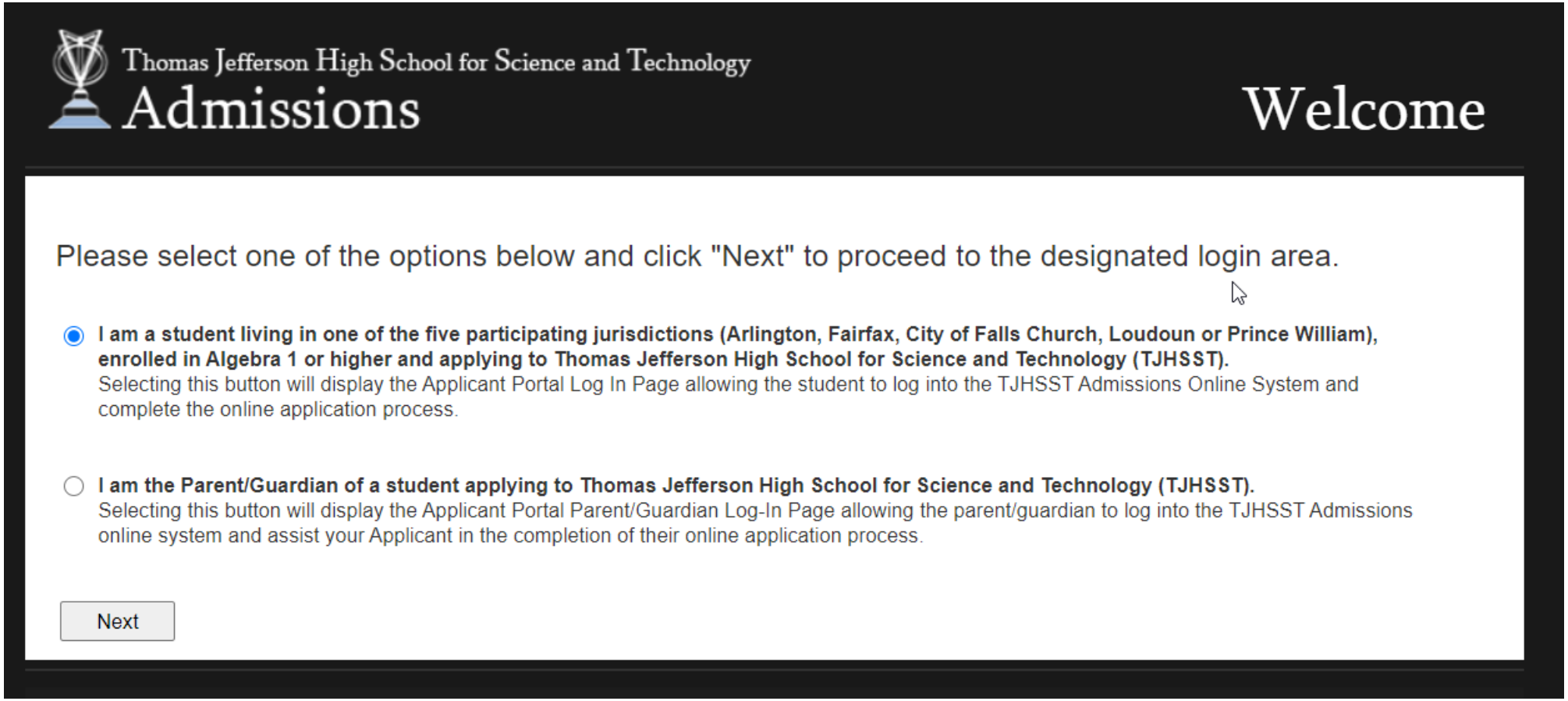
Application for the Class of 2031

Available October 5, 2026, at 4:00 pm

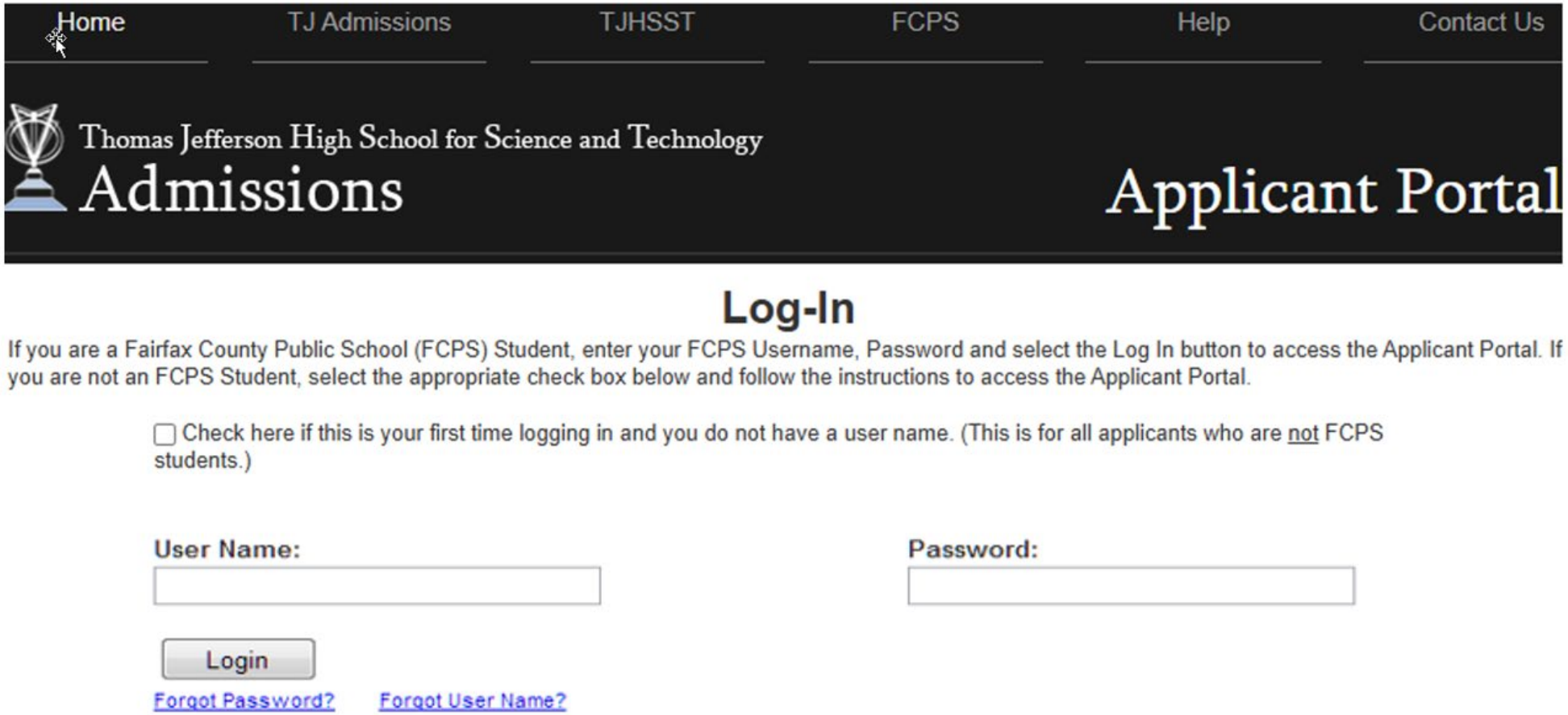
For additional information about the Freshman Application Process, scan the code or visit:

fcps.edu/tjhsst-admissions

First Screen of Application



Second Screen for Application
(Log-In Page)



Final Screen of Application

Parent/Guardian:

Please select one of the following options regarding the sharing of information about the applicant by your child's school or school division with TJ Admissions staff.

◉ **I consent** to my child's school or school division sharing information about whether my child is or is not a Student with Disability, Multilingual learner (i.e., a student developing English proficiency), or Economically Disadvantaged student (including Free or Reduced Meals status) for use by the TJ Admissions staff during the admissions process.

○ **I do not consent** to my child's school or school division sharing information about my child's status as a Student with Disability, Multilingual learner (i.e., a student developing English proficiency), or Economically Disadvantaged student (including Free or Reduced Meals status) with TJ Admissions staff. Furthermore, if any of these experience factors apply to my child, I agree to initiate documentation of my child's status by submitting the additional relevant forms available in this portal directly to TJAdmissions@fcps.edu in lieu of TJ Admissions staff receiving the information directly from my child's school or school division.

Please select the Parent/Guardian Electronic Signature Checkbox beside the legal affidavit statement signifying that you are ready to electronically sign the Application.

I, the parent of the above student, confirm that I have read and understand my child's acknowledgement and agreement (including possible consequences for non-compliance), as set forth above. I agree that the responses and information provided in this application are accurate. I also agree to hold in confidence any information which I receive about the Tests (as defined above).

* ☑ I hereby approve the Application for admission of my child for the Class of 2030 at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology. I further certify that my child resides with me and that I currently reside full-time in a TJHSST participating school division.

Application Timeline

Applications Open:
Monday, October 5 at 4:00 pm

New Applications must be started by:
Wednesday, October 28 by 4:00 pm

Applications must be submitted by:
Friday, October 30 by 4:00 pm

Administration of Writing Components

- **Saturday, Jan 9** – Student Portrait Sheet and Essay

- **Wednesday, Jan 14** – Student Portrait Sheet and Essay

[Accommodations & Alternate]

- Exhibit Portrait of a Graduate attributes and STEM interest in the Student Portrait Sheet
- Display problem-solving skills and STEM aptitude by responding to a math or science problem-solving essay

Writing Components

Student Portrait Sheet (SPS)

A series of 4 short essay prompts evaluating student demonstration of 21st-century skills.

- Maximum limit of **1,500 characters** (~200–250 words) per prompt
- Focuses on:
  - Collaborator
  - Communicator
  - Creative and Critical Thinker
  - Ethical/Global Citizen
  - Goal-Directed and Resilient Individual
  - Additional info: fcps.edu/about-fcps/portrait-graduate

Problem Solving Essay (PSE)

A single math or science scenario problem requiring analytical thinking and writing.

- Maximum limit of **3,700 characters** (~500 words)
- Requires solving the problem AND explaining step-by-step reasoning clearly
- Evaluates logical structure, clarity, and mathematical thinking
- Additional info: fcps.edu/tjhsst-admissions

Assessment Information

💻 Student responses are written on a computer.

⏱️ Total time allocation is **90 minutes**. Students must budget their time (e.g., recommended 15 minutes for each SPS question and 30 minutes for the PSE).

https://www.fcps.edu/about-fcps/portrait-graduate

Holistic Review Elements

- GPA
- Student Portrait Sheet
- Problem-Solving Essay
- Experience Factors
    - Economically Disadvantaged
    - Multilingual Learner (ML)
    - Special Education Services (IEP)

Seat Allocation Process

- Each public school within Fairfax County and each cooperating school division will be presumptively allocated a number of seats equal to 1.5% of that school's 8th grade student population ("Allocated Seats"),. The remainder of seats will not be allocated to any specific public school ("Unallocated Seats"). In the event a school has fewer eligible applicants than its number of Allocated Seats, the difference will be treated as Unallocated Seats.

FCPS Regulation 3355.17

Seat Allocation Process

- Allocated Seats
  - Applicants attending public school will be first evaluated against other applicants from the same school, and students with the strongest evaluated applications from that school will be offered admission.
- Unallocated Seats
  - All remaining public-school applicants and applicants who do not attend public school in Fairfax County or in a cooperating division will be considered for the Unallocated Seats, which will be offered to the highest evaluated applicants in that group.

FCPS Regulation 3355.17

Calendar of Events*

- Oct 5 — Applications Open at 4:00 pm
- Oct 28 — Applications must be started by 4:00 pm
- Oct 30 — Applications must be submitted by 4:00 pm
- Dec 31 — Notifications Sent to Ineligible Students (no later than)
- Jan 9 — Essay and Student Portrait Sheet Administration
- Jan 14 — Essay and Student Portrait Sheet Administration (Accommodations & Alternate – ONLY)
- Mar1 — Review Process Preparation Begins (on or about)
- Apr 30 — Final Decision Release (No Later Than)

* Dates are subject to change

All correspondence to applicants and parents is sent via the Applicant/Parent portal email system.

Answers to Frequently Asked Questions...

- Residency in one of the five participating jurisdictions is the first requirement to apply.
- The applicant must begin the application process.
- The Problem-Solving Essay and Student Portrait Sheet are not a part of the application. They are administered in a proctored environment on an assigned date in January or February.

Please call or email the Admissions Office for answers to any questions you may have. Contact info on next slide.

Additional Questions?