Melrose Public Schools

District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP)
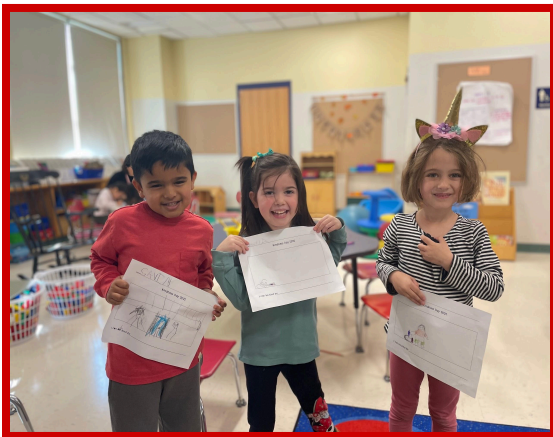
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Introduction

Melrose Public Schools Mission & Vision

The Melrose Public Schools will provide and sustain a thriving and dynamic teaching and learning environment, preparing every student to excel in their authentic life and global citizenship, as supported by an engaged community. Every student will be an engaged, challenged, enriched, and self-directed learner.

> *Every student will be an engaged, challenged, enriched, and self-directed learner.*

The theory of action guiding our strategic planning document is that if educators design a safe, supportive, and responsive student-centered learning environment, then students will own their learning and acquire the academic and social-emotional skills to realize personal success and contribute meaningfully to their communities.

Our Core Values

The following core values espouse the high expectations we have for all of the school community, directing how we conduct ourselves in fulfilling the school system's mission.

❖ *All students can learn*
❖ *All students can achieve personal learning success*
❖ *Quality and reflective teaching is essential in helping students reach academic and personal success*
❖ *Rigorous, relevant, and research-based curricula promote quality learning for ALL*
❖ *Honesty and integrity guides our individual and group actions, interactions and decisions*
❖ *By working collaboratively and collegially we will be better able to overcome obstacles, solve problems and achieve goals*
❖ *We honor and celebrate differences and respect individuality. We take pride in and respect ourselves, each other, our schools, our work, and our environment*
❖ *Strong, respectful partnerships between educators and families are critical to the successful education of all children*
❖ *Ongoing and meaningful collaboration and communication between educators and community members promotes a dynamic school system*

MPS Core Values

ALL Students Can Learn

Personal Success

Quality and Reflective Teaching

Rigorous, Relevant and Research-Based Curricula

Honesty and Integrity

Collaborative and Collegial Work

Honored and Celebrated Differences

Strong, Respectful Partnerships

Ongoing and Meaningful Collaboration

Purpose of the DCAP

The Melrose Public Schools' District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP) is designed to assist administrators, teachers, and other staff in ensuring that all possible efforts have been made to meet students' needs in general education classrooms and to support teachers in analyzing and accommodating diverse learning styles of all children that may be present in a school. Led by the building principal, staff at each school collaborates on best practices in order to ensure that adequate instructional strategies and supports are available for both students and staff. The DCAP is directly connected to procedures that are currently in place to strengthen and improve the general education program for the benefit of all students, not solely or specifically for special education.

Statement of Equity

All students in Melrose, particularly those from historically underserved groups and communities, will have equitable opportunities to excel in all content areas across all grades. Culturally and linguistically sustaining classroom and school practices will support students to thrive by creating affirming environments where students have a sense of belonging, engage in deeper learning, and are held to high expectations with targeted support.

The strategies listed are a collection of ideas and resources meant to support all students. Teachers may have additional suggestions and ideas that will also successfully meet students' needs. Teachers should use their professional judgment to add or modify curriculum accommodations on an individual and/or situational basis.

Theory of Action

The theory of action guiding our strategic planning document is that if educators design a safe, supportive, and responsive student-centered learning environment, then students will own their learning and acquire the academic and social-emotional skills to realize personal success and contribute meaningfully to their communities.

Massachusetts General Law

Massachusetts General Laws require the adoption and implementation of a District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP). This plan, developed by the district's general education program, is intended to guide school personnel in ensuring that all possible efforts have been made to meet student needs in the general education program. The DCAP is designed to support general educators in analyzing and accommodating the wide range of student learning styles that exist in any school. Additionally, the plan should be used to assist the general education teacher in analyzing and accommodating diverse learning styles of all students in the regular classroom and in providing appropriate services and support within the general education program including, but not limited to, direct and systematic instruction in reading and provision of services to address the needs of children whose behavior may interfere with learning. The plan includes provisions encouraging teacher mentoring and collaboration, and parent involvement.

Chapter 71, Section 38Q ½

> *A school district shall adopt and implement a curriculum accommodation plan to assist principals in ensuring that all efforts have been made to meet the students' needs in regular education. The plan shall be designed to assist the regular classroom teacher in analyzing and accommodating diverse learning styles of all children in the regular classroom and in providing appropriate services and support within the regular education programming, including, but not limited to, direct and systematic instruction in reading and provision of services to address the needs of children whose behavior may interfere with learning, or who do not qualify for special education services under chapter 71B. The curriculum accommodation plan shall include provisions encouraging teacher mentoring and collaboration and parental involvement.*

Chapter 71, Section 59C Amended Language

> *The School Advisory Council, including the school principal, shall meet regularly and shall assist in the identification of the educational needs of all students attending the school, shall make recommendations to the principal for the development, implementation, and assessment of the Curriculum Accommodation Plan required pursuant to Section 38Q1/2, shall assist in the review of the annual school budget and in the formulation of a School Improvement Plan.*

District and School Programs and Services Offered

In District Programs	Academic Supports
- EI (Early Intervention) (3-PreK) - ACCESS (K-12) - SSC (Student Success Classroom) (K-12) - DLC (Developmental Learning Classroom) (K-12) - LBP (Language-Based Programming) (3-12)	- Title 1 Support for Reading (K-8) - Academic Tutoring/Extra Help - MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Supports) - Student Support Team (SST) - Peer Tutoring (Secondary) - MCAS Tutoring (Secondary) - Multilingual Language Services (MLL) - Academic Support/AAA (secondary) - Focus Lab

Social-Emotional Supports	Special Education Services with an IEP
- School Counselors/Social Workers/ School Psychologists - Social Skills/Lunch Bunch - College and Career Planning - Transition Support Services (Secondary) - Advisory (Secondary) - Peer Leadership/Student Council (5-12?) - Peer Mentoring (Secondary) - PBIS (PreK-12) - Check in, Check out & Check and Connect - Support Plans - Individual Success Plan (ISP)	- Speech Language Therapy - Occupational Therapy - Physical Therapy - Counseling and Social Skills - BCBA Consultation - Academic Support and Learning Strategies - Specialized Academic Instruction - Reading, English, Math, History/Social Studies, Science - Paraprofessionals - 1:1, small groups, general education inclusion - Co-teaching - Post-Grad Program in collaboration with Stoneham (18-22) - Assistive Technology Consultation? (Michelle added) - Individualized Behavior Plans (Michelle added-not sure if this goes under Social-Emotional supports or here)

Technology

- ❖ Chromebooks
- ❖ Accessibility Features (Google Read & Write, translations, larger type, subtitles/captioning, increase contrast, note-taking tools)
- ❖ Audiobooks and online textbooks
- ❖ Smartboards
- ❖ Document cameras
- ❖ Voice Amplification Systems
- ❖ Online or app-based organizational tools
- ❖ Digital Portfolios
- ❖ Google Classroom
- ❖ iPads with communication apps (TouchChat, Proloquo2Go)?(Michelle added)

Professional Development

- ❖ New Teacher Orientation
- ❖ New Teacher Mentoring Program
- ❖ Professional Learning workshops
- ❖ District-wide PD days
- ❖ Grant-funded PD
- ❖ Observations
- ❖ Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)
- ❖ DESE sponsored PD
- ❖ Course reimbursement opportunities
- ❖ Curriculum Program Reviews
- ❖ District-wide resources
- ❖ Book studies
- ❖ Outside provider PDs
- ❖ Monthly Paraprofessional PDs? (Michelle added)

Home-School Partnership

- ❖ Parent Advisory Council (PAC)
- ❖ Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)
- ❖ School Site Councils
- ❖ District Committees
- ❖ Friends of Melrose METCO (FOMM)
- ❖ Open House
- ❖ Parent Teacher Conferences
- ❖ Parent Portals
- ❖ Teacher Websites and Google Classrooms
- ❖ School Weekly Newsletters
- ❖ Parent and Teacher Communication
- ❖ Academic and Social Opportunities and Events
- ❖ MLL Events
- ❖ Published Curriculum
- ❖ School Committee Meetings

Overview of Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS)

A Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) is a framework for how school districts can build the necessary systems to ensure that each and every student receives a high-quality educational experience. It is designed to support schools with proactively identifying and addressing the strengths and needs of all students by optimizing data-driven decision-making, progress monitoring, and the use of evidence-based supports and strategies with increasing intensity to sustain student growth. In 2018, Massachusetts updated its MTSS Blueprint to reflect the most current research and enhance the user experience. For example, the current blueprint more explicitly focuses on equitable access and universal design for learning (UDL) and fully integrates social-emotional, behavioral, and academic learning.

Universal Design for Learning 3.0 (UDL 3.0)

The Melrose DCAP is aligned with the principles of Universal Design for Learning 3.0 (UDL 3.0).

As described in CAST's UDL 3.0 Guidelines[1] there are three main principles behind the theory of Universal Design for Learning which collectively strive to "acknowledge individual, institutional, and system level barriers to learning without limits, emphasize the value of interdependence and collective learning, and shift from educator-centered to learner-centered language."   The themes emphasized in the three principles include the following:

★ *Engagement*
  ○ Centering, affirming, and sustaining learners' interests and identities
  ○ Emphasizing the role of belonging in teaching and learning
  ○ Promoting the role of joy and play for learners and educators alike
  ○ Cultivating empathy and repairing harm with restorative practices
★ *Representation*
  ○ Authentically representing a diversity of identities, perspectives, and narratives as they relate to learners
  ○ Considering perceptions of people, cultures, and languages
  ○ Valuing multiple ways of knowing and making meaning
★ *Action and Expression*
  ○ Honoring and valuing a wide variety of forms of communication
  ○ Centering and valuing forms of expression that have been overlooked or ignored by addressing biases
  ○ Challenging exclusionary practices to build more accessible, inclusive spaces and systems

The strategies listed in this section are intended to provide additional access points for all students.

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[1] https://udlguidelines.cast.org/more/about-guidelines-3-0/

Providing Options for Multiple Means of Engagement

Options for Welcoming Interests and Identities	❖ Establish relevance and purpose for learning by relating to previous experiences ❖ Make a positive personal comment when a student shows interest ❖ Utilize cooperative or collaborative learning strategies (think-pair-share and other examples, when appropriate) ❖ Build routines and practices that reduce distraction and increase active engagement ❖ Provide seating options (sensory, input, back supports) ❖ Ensure students have at least one daily task they can complete successfully ❖ Establish and practice consistent expectations and routines **Addressing Behavioral and Sensory Concerns** ❖ Proactively alert students to changes in schedules or routine ❖ Use of self-regulation tools such as: scale/chart, emotional thermometer, zones of regulation, segmented clock, timers, mobile device, (sensory toolbox/choices?-Michelle added) ❖ Designate and allow access to a calming area ❖ Allow time for the student to keep a journal to record anxiety-producing thoughts, which can be shared with a trusted adult ❖ Provide time for relaxation and/or movement techniques for all students ❖ Collaborate with the student to solve problems ❖ Provide student with alternatives and choices ❖ Reduce the amount of an assignment (quality over quantity) if the student is overwhelmed ❖ Respect personal space to maintain student's comfort ❖ Proactively encourage 1:1 positive connections with students ❖ Engage students in determining consequences and restorative practices when expectations are not met **General Social /Emotional/Behavioral Accommodations** ❖ Determine the student's understanding of the situation ❖ Reduce verbal prompting: Give prompt and use wait time ❖ Validate student's feelings first, then give choice of attainable demands ❖ Use calm verbal language/tone ❖ Allow silence for de-escalation and reflection ❖ Develop a visual or signal with the student to alert the teacher of social/emotional stress or need of a break ❖ Set up easily attainable personalized social interaction expectations so that the student can achieve social success ❖ Prompt students to set goals, develop action plan, and reflect on their progress on specific SEL skills ❖ Consistently follow a set routine ❖ Proactively make 1:1 connections with students

Options for Sustaining Effort and Persistence	❖ Frequent checks for assignment progress/completion ❖ Give advance warning of transitions ❖ Use physical proximity to help student refocus ❖ Monitor and encourage effective use of time cueing ❖ Integrate short work periods with breaks or change of tasks ❖ Ignore attention-getting behavior for a short time; recognize a student who is exhibiting expected behavior ❖ Address behavior, rather than criticizing the student ❖ Speak privately to student about inappropriate behavior without the audience of peers ❖ Use of behavior cue cards, graphic organizers, social stories, role-playing ❖ Behavioral modification-charts, checklists, plans, incentives ❖ Use visual/auditory reminders of behavioral expectations ❖ Praise approximation of desired behavior to shape expected behavior ❖ Allow time for students to make decisions ❖ Ignore challenging questions ❖ Provide opportunities for student to assume leadership roles ❖ Provide opportunities for the student to self-select an activity to pursue independently ❖ Identify how a student's cultural norms may influence your perception of their behavior (e.g. eye contact, etc.) ❖ Prioritize assignments and steps to completing assignments
Options for Emotional Capacity	❖ Shape approximations of desired behavior by providing direct reinforcement such as praise or immediate feedback for correct answers ❖ Check with student for understanding of instructions ❖ Give a personal cue to begin work ❖ Give work in smaller units ❖ Provide immediate reinforcers and feedback ❖ Introduce the assignment in sequential steps ❖ Check on progress often in the first few minutes of work ❖ Provide time suggestions for each task ❖ Provide a checklist for long, detailed tasks ❖ Recognize many newcomer English -Learners experience a "silent period" or culture shock requiring additional patience and support (e.g.create many opportunities for small successes)

Providing Options for Multiple Means of Representation

Options for Perception	- Provide authentic learning experiences rooted in student interests or framed around real-world issues - Break assignments into segments of shorter tasks (chunking) - Allow low vision aids and/or large print materials - Avoid crowded, cluttered assignments by utilizing techniques such as blocking (block assignments into smaller segments), cutting (cut into sections), folding (fold into sections), and highlighting, color-coding or underlining - Keep written assignments and workspace free from extraneous and/or irrelevant distractors - Provide graphic organizers and templates for note-taking - Provide multimedia representations, video representations, etc. - Allow student to use inverted colors on a computer screen to make things more readable
Options for Language and Symbols	- Review assignment to be sure student has a clear understanding of all its parts - Provide clear and well-defined assignments - Preview and clarify vocabulary - Frequently check for understanding - Provide material and resources in first language - Explicitly teach translation tools - Provide conversation frames, word/phrase banks, and/or visual supports - Provide opportunities for students to provide short oral responses, both in English and first language, to be recorded by the teacher or paraprofessional in place of written tasks (SEI) - Provide opportunities for student to hear model responses from teacher, paraprofessional, or peers - Provide text-to-speech software and opportunities for audiobooks
Options for Building Knowledge	- Use concrete examples of concepts before teaching the lesson - Preview content and relate to student's culture (build background knowledge) - Have student verbalize instructions before beginning task - Highlight information to be learned - Avoid having student copy from the board

Providing Options for Multiple Means of Action & Expression

Options for Interaction	❖ Allow students to share with peers prior to sharing with the whole group ❖ Allow students to write down their answer on paper or a whiteboard instead of or before sharing verbally **Early Childhood to Early Elementary Writing Expression** ❖ Provide alternative writing tools ❖ Match the appropriate tools for writing ❖ Preferable writing tools include pipsqueak markers, HWT flip crayons, golf pencils, thick handled paint brushes, broken crayons or chalk, and sometimes egg crayons/pebble crayons ❖ Avoid caps on the end of marker, "normal" crayons or thick crayons, skinny paint brushes that come with the watercolor sets, or "normal" pencils or tripod pencils ❖ Prompt orally for students to fix their grasp. Use visual to prompt correct grasp ❖ Provide opportunities for multi-sensory writing including finger paints, shaving cream, sand, salt, rice, gel, etc. **Elementary to Secondary Integration and Written Expression** ❖ Reduce the amount of copying from text and board ❖ Allow student to use cursive, printing, or typing ❖ Allow students to access speech to text software via the Chromebook ❖ Set realistic and mutually agreed upon expectation for neatness ❖ Allow student to type, record, or give answers orally instead of writing ❖ Limit tasks focusing on speed and accuracy ❖ Provide copies of notes ❖ Accept key word responses instead of complete sentences

Options for Expression and Communication	**Specific to Early Childhood and Elementary**
	
	❖ Provide opportunities to use playdoh, putty, tweezers, tongs, pintzer grips
	❖ Provide opportunities for crab walks, yoga, wall push ups, scooter hops, hippity hops, wall climbing, and balance activities
	❖ Use a variety of different workspaces such as table, easel, clipboards, an angled binder. Use a vertical surface if working on grasp
	❖ Ensure correct body position. Check that the table is not too high and that the chair is not too low
	❖ Support students with appropriate paper
	   ➢ Black and white paper, not colored paper is preferable
	   ➢ Keep paper simple and avoid distracting borders
	   ➢ Use single line paper and not triple lined paper
	   ➢ Provide modeling of letter formation in small groups
	   ➢ Use the wooden pieces and the prompts/letter stories provided by Handwriting without Tears following the sequence of Lively Letters
	   ➢ Refrain from having children complete worksheets without an adult monitoring correct letter formation
	   ➢ Reminder students to start letters at the top
	
	How to write numbers:
	
	📄 Number Rhymes
	
	Specific Writing Accommodations for Kindergarten through Secondary

Schools

📄 Development Writing Stages

- ❖ Alternatives to paper and pencil writing:
    - ➢ Provide students the opportunity to rehearse their stories before writing. Encourage use of oral language for students to tell their stories before writing.
    - ➢ Provide opportunities for students to write throughout the school day such as in block area, at recess, dramatic play.
    - ➢ Have students draw and then tell about their drawings to help support their writing.
    - ➢ Make the learning goals more salient for the student using a learning progression.
    - ➢ Speech-to-text software
- ❖ Help keep student's work area free of unnecessary materials
- ❖ Frequently check the organization of the student's notebook
- ❖ Establish a color-coded system for organizing materials by subject or use a trapper keeper
- ❖ Provide students the opportunity to rehearse their stories before writing.
- ❖ Encourage use of oral language for students to tell their stories before writing.
- ❖ Provide opportunities for students to write throughout the school day such as in block area, at recess, dramatic play.
- ❖ Have students draw and then tell about their drawings to help support their writing.
- ❖ Make the learning goals more salient for the student using a learning progression.

🟨 Writing K-5 Progressions

- ❖ Provide alternative writing tools:
- ❖ Match the appropriate tools for writing.
- ❖ Preferable writing tools include pipsqueak markers, HWT flip crayons, golf pencils, thick handled paint brushes, broken crayons or chalk, and sometimes egg crayons/pebble crayons. These require less force and provide a glide for feedback vs standard pencil
- ❖ Avoid caps on the end of marker, "normal" crayons or thick crayons, skinny paint brushes that come with the watercolor sets, or "normal" pencils or tripod pencils
- ❖ Prompt orally for students to fix their grasp. Use visual to prompt correct grasp.
- ❖ See visuals to remind students of a correct grasp.

📄 Letter Size.pdf

📄 Tweet & Thumbs Up.pdf

Provide opportunities for multi-sensory writing, including finger paints, shaving cream, sand, salt, rice, gel, etc.

Options for Strategy Development

- ❖