

**BURLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**District Curriculum Accommodations Plan**  
**(DCAP)**

***A Resource Guide for Teachers, Principals, Student Support Services Personnel, and Parents to Meet the Needs of All Learners of the Burlington School District***

Massachusetts General Laws require the adoption and implementation of a District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP). This plan is intended to guide principals and teachers in ensuring that all possible efforts are made to meet student needs in general education classrooms and to support teachers in analyzing and accommodating the wide range of student learning styles and needs that exist in any school. By describing in a document the accommodations, instructional supports and strategies that are available in general education, and the process for determining effective interventions for struggling learners, it is hoped that this DCAP will help support diverse learners in our schools and avoid unnecessary referrals to special education.

***Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 38Q1/2 “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.”***

**DCAP Overview:**

The role of the Burlington Public Schools has evolved over the years from one of essentially developing and implementing specific support programs and services for students to one of collaboration with Principals, classroom teachers, and curriculum coordinators and department heads. This collaboration in planning and implementation enables the District to provide specifically defined programs and services to continue to meet the needs of the students.

The formulation of new programs and service initiatives are a result of the broader representation of opinions through District Leadership Teams and individual School Based Teams. The Burlington Public Schools in consultation with these Teams has facilitated the establishment of programs and services to more effectively and efficiently meet the needs of the students.

The Burlington Public Schools is dedicated to working collaboratively with educators, parents, support professionals and the community to ensure that all students receive their appropriate services and supports in the least restrictive environment/setting, conducive to facilitating their maximum emotional, social and academic growth. The focus of this collaborative approach is to

prepare students for productive lives as full members of our society. The Burlington Public Schools DCAP was developed and refined through several meetings with district administrators and was shared with each School Leadership Team. Additionally, the DCAP was disseminated and explained to all staff at the elementary, middle and high school grade levels. The Burlington Public Schools DCAP addresses various strategies that will help to achieve this objective, including:

***Systems of Tiered Instruction (RTI)*** - A system used to screen, assess, identify, plan for, and provide interventions to any student at-risk of school failure due to academic or behavior needs. This approach referred to as Response to Intervention (RTI), is a process that provides immediate intervention to struggling students at the first indication of a failure to learn.

***Special Education Services*** - These would include services that are available to students through the regular education program, including services to address the needs of students whose behavior may interfere with learning. A description of the District's Special Education programs and services is appended to this DCAP.

***Title I*** - Memorial, Francis Wyman, Pine Glen

***Reading Services*** - This means the direct and systematic instruction in reading for all students.

***Mentoring and Collaboration*** - This set of strategies includes those that encourage teacher mentoring and collaboration.

***Parental Involvement*** - This effort includes workshops/presentations and strategies that encourage parental involvement in their children's education.

While not required by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), this DCAP seeks to identify strategies in several other areas including:

***School Organization*** - Included here are such things as changes to the school schedule (such as additional instructional time or block scheduling), review of school policies and discipline codes, RtI and pre-referral activities before students are evaluated to determine eligibility for special education, after-school options (such as homework assistance and peer coaching.) and behavioral interventions including Bullying Programs/Bullying Curriculum.

***Curriculum Alignment***- These strategies provide for a review of local curriculum in relation to state learning standards.

***Additional Support Services*** - Services that provide additional staffing or consultation on behavioral issues and on literacy development are included in this category.

**Psychologists:** School Psychologists perform evaluations and screenings, provide consultation to classrooms, and provide direct services to children both in the classroom and individually to address academic, social/emotional, and/or behavioral needs.

**school Counselor:** The school counselors at the secondary level support the academic, career and personal/social-emotional development of all students. They participate in disciplinary meetings as well as Special Education and 504 Team meetings. They assist students and parents with the college application process or other post secondary goals. At the elementary level, the school counselors support the social/emotional development of all students. They provide social skills instruction within the classroom and within small groups. The elementary school counselors coordinate and oversee students' 504 Accommodation Plans. The school counselors also provide support to teachers and parents.

**Reading and Math Curriculum Coaches:** Coaches facilitate curriculum work and alignment through Curriculum Councils and are the liaisons between the councils and the district leadership teams; they provide professional development to all staff in the district and also support teachers through modeling lessons and providing resources; coaches also manage student data and progress monitoring through the RtI model

**Speech and Language Pathologist:** SLP's perform evaluations and screenings, provide consultation to classrooms, and provide direct services to children both in the classroom and in the therapy room to address communication skills including the following: receptive and expressive language, social communication, articulation, fluency, voice, and hearing.

**Occupational Therapist:** OT's perform evaluations and screenings, provide consultation to classrooms and provide direct services to children both in the classroom and in the therapy room to address fine motor and perceptual motor skills as well as address sensory integration skills.

**Physical Therapist:** PT's perform evaluations and screenings, provide consultation to classrooms and provide direct services to children both in the general education setting and in the therapy room to address gross motor skills

**Behaviorist:** The behaviorist provides consultation and support to classroom throughout the district as well as direct services to students in district programs. The behaviorist conducts systematic behavioral assessments, provides interpretations of the results, and develops and supervises behavior intervention plans.

**Vision Specialist:** The vision specialist conducts assessments and provides consultative services to classroom teachers as well as direct instruction to students with visual impairments.

**Assistive Technology:** Products, devices, or equipment (whether acquired commercially, modified or customized) that are used to maintain, increase, or improve the functional capabilities of individuals with

disabilities.

Strategies	Description
Assistance to general education classroom teachers to help them analyze and accommodate various students for learning needs and to manage students' behaviors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weekly preschool therapist meetings to provide consultation to classroom teachers at the preschool</li> <li>• New teacher meetings and new teacher mentor program.</li> <li>• Grade level, department, and staff meetings.</li> <li>• Curriculum Leaders, Department Heads, Literacy, Math, and Science Specialists from K-12 assist classroom teachers in problem-solving and analyzing instructional practice and student results.</li> <li>• Building-based teacher support teams in each building convene regularly to provide instructional and behavioral intervention suggestions to teachers</li> <li>• Middle School teams meet regularly to discuss student needs and behavioral and instructional strategies</li> <li>• High School teams meet regularly to discuss at risk students needs and behavioral and instructional strategies</li> <li>• Curriculum Leaders K-8 provide consultation for classroom teachers</li> <li>• Library/Media Specialists and Technology Integration Specialists provide resources for curriculum and instructional and collaborate with classroom teachers around instruction</li> <li>• school counselors and school psychologists at elementary level provide whole class, small group, and individual counseling and social skill groups.</li> <li>• school staff, school psychologist, and school adjustment counselor at the high school provide individual and small group social skills and issue-specific groups (divorce, new to town, sibling issues, etc)</li> <li>• Grade level, department, and faculty meetings</li> <li>• Curriculum councils and Task Forces</li> </ul>
Strategies	Description
Support services that are available to students through the general education, including services	<p>Preschool:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social-Emotional Programs in the Classroom: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Preschool Life Skills Curriculum</li> <li>◦ Social Thinking Preschool Curriculum</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Behavior support through a behaviorist</li> <li>• Summer program for students at risk for significant regression</li> </ul>

<p>to address the needs of students whose behavior may interfere with learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● RTI groups for communication and motor skills</li> </ul> <p>Elementary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Social-Emotional Programs in the Classroom: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Social Thinking Curriculum</li> <li>○ Responsive Classroom</li> <li>○ Classroom-wide system of behavior management</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Behavior support through BCBA</li> <li>● Social skills and social pragmatics groups conducted by the school school counselor or school psychologist</li> <li>● Reading Specialist and tutors work with individual/small groups of students for reading instruction</li> <li>● Reading Specialists help teachers administer assessments, interpret results and design instruction to meet student needs</li> <li>● Literacy and Math Coach provides teacher consultation for curriculum development, screening, data analysis, informal and formal assessments, demonstration teaching, and co-taught classes.</li> <li>● iReady used as universal screening tool for reading and math</li> <li>● Foundations phonics instruction in K-3. Frequent assessments lead to “double dose” of instruction in the classroom as needed</li> <li>● Kindergarten teachers administer DIBELS benchmark assessments and form RTI groups based on assessment data. Kindergarten teachers use the DIBELS to regularly progress monitor students in intervention groups.</li> <li>● ESL staff provides language learning instruction and support for students in academic classes.</li> <li>● Literacy tutors and Math tutors provide targeted reading and math support in eligible schools.</li> <li>● Summer programs provide literacy and math instruction for grades K-5.</li> <li>● Homework Club</li> <li>● RTI group in the areas of academics, communication, fine/gross motor, and behavior</li> <li>● Technology resources-iPads, ST Math, Symphony, Reflex, iReady, various reading and math programs</li> </ul> <p>Middle School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Tutoring support services</li> <li>● At risk meetings are held weekly at MSMS to exchange information on students who are in the court system in an attempt to help support them</li> <li>● Pragmatic groups to support social learning and positive peer relations</li> <li>● Executive functioning groups to support organization and planning across the curriculum</li> <li>● Group and individual counseling to support emotional development</li> <li>● After school teacher availability</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School Adjustment Counselor</li> <li>• Reading Specialist</li> <li>• CBJ meetings are held monthly to exchange information on students who are in the court system in an attempt to help support them</li> </ul> <p>High School Support Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Bridge Program</li> <li>• MCAS mastery tutoring offered in Math and Science</li> <li>• Tutoring support services</li> <li>• CBJ meetings are held monthly at BHS to exchange information on students who are in the court system in an attempt to help support them</li> <li>• At Risk meetings are held bi-monthly at BHS to exchange information on students who are struggling academically and behaviorally in an attempt to help support them</li> <li>• After-school teacher availability</li> </ul>
Strategies	Description
Professional Development opportunities provided to increase instructional skills for all teachers	<p>District Wide Professional Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training for all staff in implementing Preschool Life Skills Curriculum.</li> <li>• Training for all teachers in classroom problem behavior and intervention</li> <li>• Three day professional development conference for all Burlington staff prior to start of school</li> <li>• Graduate level courses available in literacy and math</li> <li>• SEI course available for all teachers</li> <li>• Concepts in Standards Based Teaching available for all teachers</li> <li>• "How Do I Do That?" series provides professional development in technology for all staff</li> <li>• Three day professional development conference for all Burlington staff prior to start of school</li> <li>• Targeted professional development opportunities in licensed content area</li> <li>• Training for staff on executive functioning and transition skills</li> </ul>
Direct Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each elementary student has a daily, 90 minute literacy block where teachers provide direct instruction in reading and writing.</li> <li>• Each elementary student has 75 minutes of direct instruction in math</li> <li>• Literacy specialists assist elementary school teachers with the implementation of literacy assessments and programming</li> <li>• Elementary literacy, science, and math curriculum coaches provide model lessons for classroom teachers</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integration of test-taking skills instruction in classes.</li> <li>• Use of MCAS test format in classroom assessments.</li> <li>• Use of MCAS vocabulary in classroom instruction and assessment in individual classrooms.</li> </ul>
Teacher mentoring and collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Burlington Public Schools follows all DESE regulations around non-professional status teachers and mentoring programs</li> </ul>
Changes to the school schedule, such as additional instructional time or block scheduling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The elementary schools have 90 minutes of direct literacy instruction and 75 minutes of direct math instruction daily</li> <li>• The elementary schools have a designated a designated 30 minute extension/intervention block for individual/small group instruction in targeted areas of need</li> <li>• The high school has a rotating schedule that includes one long block each day</li> </ul>
Review of local curriculum in relation to state learning standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each year's MCAS results are analyzed and compared to the previous year's results</li> <li>• Curriculum is aligned to state standards; units are monitored and updated regularly</li> </ul>
Strategies	Description
Additional staffing or consultation on academic and behavioral issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All schools have at least one nurse on staff.</li> <li>• All schools have Speech-Language Pathologists, Occupational Therapists, and Physical Therapists that provide teacher consultation, perform classroom observations, provide direct services, and conduct screenings and evaluations.</li> <li>• School Psychologists, school counselors and special education liaisons are specialists in behavior observation, consultation and program development and can provide support to classroom and specialist teachers as needed</li> <li>• School Adjustment counselor at the middle school and high school can provide support for behavioral interventions and planning</li> <li>• Each building has a trained team of teachers who can safely de-escalate student behavior and, if necessary, restrain a student</li> <li>• Psychologists provide regular and ongoing consultation to staff at all levels, including completion of Functional Behavior Assessments, when needed to support a student</li> <li>• The high school has one licensed social worker employed as a</li> </ul>

	school counselor who can support students, parents and teachers
Communication with parents and opportunities for parent involvement in the schools	<p>Preschool:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director, Classroom, and Therapist blogs.</li> <li>• BECC website.</li> <li>• Progress reports three times a year; report cards two times a year.</li> <li>• Parent conferences two times a year.</li> <li>• Open House for parents and students in September.</li> <li>• In August, parents receive letters from their child's teacher.</li> </ul> <p>Elementary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School based websites</li> <li>• Principal's blog and individual classroom blogs</li> <li>• Opportunities for parent volunteers within the schools</li> <li>• Back to School nights held at all elementary schools at the start of the school year</li> <li>• Standards-based report cards sent home three times per year</li> <li>• At least one parent-teacher conference per year</li> <li>• Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) at all elementary schools</li> </ul> <p>Middle School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classroom and teacher blogs, websites, and other learning management systems.</li> <li>• Progress reports are sent during the middle of each term</li> <li>• Parent teacher conferences and opportunities to schedule team meetings with content area teachers</li> <li>• Back to school night</li> </ul> <p>High School:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classroom and principal's blogs, websites, and twitter accounts</li> <li>• Interim reports are sent during the middle of each term</li> <li>• students receive course verifications in the Spring</li> <li>• Any senior in danger of not graduating receives a letter in the Spring</li> <li>• Parent teacher conferences are held in the fall and in the Spring</li> <li>• Parent Portal-Parent access to student progress</li> </ul> <p>All Schools preK-high school hold Back-to-School nights.</p>

## WHAT ARE ACCOMMODATIONS?

**Accommodations are practices and procedures in the areas of presentation, response, setting, and timing/scheduling that provide equitable access during instruction and assessments for students with disabilities.**

**Accommodations are intended to reduce or even eliminate the effects of a student's disability; they do not reduce learning expectations. The accommodations provided to a**



student must be the same for classroom instruction, classroom assessments, and district and state assessments. It is critical to note that although some accommodations may be appropriate for instructional use, they may not be appropriate for use on a standardized assessment. There may be consequences (e.g., lowering or not counting a student's test score) for the use of some accommodations during state assessments. It is very important for educators to become familiar with state policies regarding accommodations during assessments.

Typically, accommodation use does not begin and end in school. Students who use accommodations will generally also need them at home, in the community, and as they get older, in postsecondary education and at work. Accommodations for instruction and assessment are integrally intertwined.

**Presentation Accommodations:** Allow students to access information in ways that do not require them to visually read standard print. These alternate modes of access are auditory, multi-sensory, tactile, and visual.

- Present content in multi-modal approaches
- Break down long term assignments
- Use transition cues
- Use technology assisted instruction
- Additional small group/1:1 instruction (even before or after school)
- Pair student with peer instructors/tutoring
- Paper to peer to provide notes (grades 6-12)
- Provide handouts
- Present demonstration model/exemplars
- Utilize manipulatives (across curriculum)
- Pre-teach vocabulary
- Make/use vocabulary files
- Repeat clarify directions
- Break-down directions/tasks into smaller steps
- Arrangement of materials on page/Reduced amount of visual information on the page
- Highlight test/study guides
- Use supplementary materials
- Marker to guide reading
- Large graph paper format
- Graphic organizers
- Assignment notebooks
- Use of manipulatives
- Use of 1:1 to technology to support instruction

**Setting Accommodations:** Change the location in which a test or assignment is given or the conditions of the assessment setting.

- Strategic seating
- Change student's location within the classroom

**Timing and Scheduling Accommodations:**Increase the allowable length of time to complete an assessment or assignment and perhaps change the way the time is organized.

- Extended time
- Allow breaks
- Provide after or before school help regularly
- Use of daily schedules

**Response Accommodations:**Allow students to complete activities, assignments, and assessments in different ways or to solve or organize problems using some type of assistive device or organizer.

- Reduce assignments requiring copying
- Use rubrics
- Provide homework logs and journals for homework follow-up
- **Accommodations for Testing Adaptations:**
- Alternate type of tests
- Preview language of test questions
- Administer in short periods
- Change format visually
- **Accommodations for Classroom Assignments:**
- Reduce paper and pencil tasks
- Use pictorial directions
- Give extra cues and prompts
- Allow student to record or type assignments
- Buddy system
- Daily checklists of tasks

- **Behavioral Strategies:**
- Develop self monitoring systems
- Change seating
- Increase student-teacher interaction
- Develop behavior plan with motivating incentives
- Adjust classroom management techniques

- Parent communication and shared incentives
- Define clear and consistent expectations-student-class
- Consult with school school or psychologist
- Use charts and graphs to monitor expectations
- Warnings for transitions
- Use of daily/individual schedule

**Motivation and Reinforcement:**

- Increase positive reinforcement
- Increase concrete reinforcement
- Offer choice
- Use student's strengths/interests
- Reinforce student's initiative in their own learning
- Promote self-determination skills