## **EASTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**



# DISTRICT CURRICULUM ACCOMMODATION PLAN (DCAP)

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#### DISTRICT CURRICULUM ACCOMMODATION PLAN OVERVIEW

#### Vision:

The vision of EPS is to provide a relevant, rigorous learning experience in a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment which empowers students and educators to embrace curiosity, think critically, develop positive relationships, and exhibit resilience.

#### Core Values (and Beliefs)

Students are at the center of our decision making; therefore, we value:

#### **Continuous Growth**

- We hold high expectations for ourselves and others
- We know that learning never ends
- We understand that valuable learning can come from mistakes or failure
- We must persevere to reach our goals

#### Safety and Respect

- We deserve the safest and most supportive learning environment
- We respect the safety and boundaries of others
- We are diverse learners, and all learners can thrive
- We embrace and honor our differences with empathy and understanding

#### **Communication and Collaboration**

- We clearly communicate our questions and concerns
- We share our views with respect and with the appropriate source
- We know teamwork is not always easy, but it is worth the effort
- We have a collective responsibility for the education of all children

#### Leading by Example

- We understand that others are watching and learning from us
- We are all models of integrity and respect
- We are accountable for our own actions and decisions
- We value what we can learn from others.

#### **DCAP Overview**

#### What is a District Curriculum Accommodation Plan?

The Easton 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 a building administrator, 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.

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.

#### What is the law?

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 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 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, 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.

#### What does a DCAP ensure?

Changes in the Massachusetts Special Education Laws require school districts to implement Curriculum Accommodation Plans (CAPs) to help ensure all efforts have been made to meet students' needs in general education.

The plan should encompass efforts as follows:

- Analysis of diverse learning styles within the general classroom;
- Accommodations to meet needs of the diverse learning styles within a general education class;
- Provision of appropriate services and supports within the general education classroom;
- Services to address the needs of children whose behavior may interfere with learning;
- Encouragement of parental involvement in their children's education;
- Encouragement of teacher mentoring and collaboration;
- Assistance to general education staff through professional development and collaboration.

This Curriculum Accommodation Plan details procedures, programs, and supports available and implemented within the individual schools of the district. 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.

#### How does the DCAP inform instruction and practices that help students grow?

The DCAP is a great resource in identifying techniques/accommodations/strategies that can be provided to all students in the general education classroom. We accommodate and differentiate our instruction and curriculum to meet students' needs. It is expected that across content areas and grade-levels, students will need various levels of support. All students vary in their needs based on age, development, social/emotional wellbeing, external factors, and more. The DCAP can be a reference and resource for a wide range of supports that students can receive within the general education setting.

How do students gain access to the supports, interventions, and accommodations noted within the DCAP?

All staff may provide individual accommodations to students on an as-needed basis and specific to the content or situation. In addition, building-based support teams and data teams meet on a regular basis to discuss student progress and growth. Through the Easton (SIT) process, intervention and accommodation strategies are discussed to meet the needs of individual students.

#### The Easton Public Schools DCAP has four main objectives:

- 1. To assist general education teachers in analyzing, assessing and accommodating diverse learners
- 2. To increase, through the DCAP's articulation, support services and instructional delivery options available within general education settings
- 3. To recommend instructional interventions for struggling learners
- 4. To delineate resources available to teachers in the areas of student support, mentoring, professional development and coaching

The DCAP is intended to also address various strategies at each level including:

- Accommodations to address various students' learning needs, including students who
  are identified as English Language Learners, at risk, Title 1, special education, gifted and
  talented and those requiring behavioral supports.
- Support services that are available to students through the general education programs, including services to address the needs of students whose behavior may interfere with learning.
- Direct and systematic reading instruction for all students.

#### **CURRICULUM ACCOMMODATIONS**

Accommodations are provided within the <u>general education</u> setting and may be available to all students to provide equal access to learning and to enable students to demonstrate growth. Accommodations do NOT change the instructional level or content, delivery of instruction, or performance criteria. The following list of accommodations are tools that educators can use within their classrooms. It is not an exhaustive list, but rather a starting point.

#### ASSESSMENT ACCOMMODATIONS

- Format
  - Fill-In-the-Blanks: (blanks at the end of sentence)
  - Graphic organizers
  - Wordbank

- Short answer rather than essay
- Fewer Choices (Multiple Choice and Matching)
- Reduced number of items / problems
- Open-note or open-book
- Simplified directions
- Chunking
- Simplified numbers
- Utilize alternative assessments: oral, multiple choice, computer-based, paper-based, word clarification, except reading tests

#### Administration

- Clarify Directions
- Test in alternative location
- o Permit breaks during testing
- Provide preferential seating/flexible seating arrangements
- Extend time
- Monitor test progress
- Provide incremental testing (ie. one page at a time)
- Set time limits
- Modify pacing
- o Provide wait time
- o Provide a scribe
- Work / performance exemplars
- Provide manipulatives

#### Reference Tools

- Calculator (depending on skill being assessed)
- o Formula/Reference sheet
- Multiplication chart
- Word banks
- Study guides
- Dictionaries/Language Dictionary\*
- Graphic Organizers

#### Alter Visual Presentation

- Write directly on test
- Use of additional white space
- Bold or underline keywords
- Highlighter color/code material
- Provide larger print
- Provide lines on test
- Colored overlays or overlay tracker

#### Assistive Technology

- o Word Processor
- Speech to text

#### **CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTIONAL ACCOMMODATIONS**

#### Pacing

- Additional instructional practice time
- Chunk information
- o Provide wait time
- Allow breaks

#### Additional Instruction

- Extra review and practice
- Pre-teach vocabulary
- Building background
- Targeted small group instruction

#### Presentation

- o Provide multimodal presentation of instruction and materials
- Differentiate instruction and assignments
- Connect to prior knowledge
- o Graphic Organizers
- Partner and group work
- Provide manipulatives
- Instruct students in study skills, note-taking; model these skills during instruction
- o Decrease visual stimulus

#### Assistive Technology

- Word processing
- Speech to text
- Spell check, grammar check, word prediction
- Provide electronic translation tools

#### Modeling

- Provide a range of examples
- Demonstrate step by step procedures
- Provide sentence starters or sentence strips
- Use cues and prompts to draw attention to critical features
- Emphasizing main idea (highlighting, color coding, bolding, verbal cues)

#### Resources

- Checklists
- Study guides
- o Guided notes
- Rubrics
- o Graphic organizers
- Mnemonic aids

#### Monitor

- Cue student
- Check in (understanding, progress, wellbeing)

#### BEHAVIORAL/SOCIAL EMOTIONAL ACCOMMODATIONS

- Classroom and school expectations
- Frequent movement and brain breaks
- Redirect off-task behavior
- Alerts and previews that can help learners anticipate and prepare for changes in activities, schedules, and novel events
- Charts, calendars, schedules, visible timers, cues, etc that can increase the predictability of daily activities and transitions
- Provide prompts and modeling that guide learners in social interactions
- Preferential seating
- Goal setting
- Provide prompts, reminders, guides, rubrics, checklists that focus on self regulation
- Verbal/Written feedback
- Access and consultation to other school support resources.
- Quick, positive reinforcement statements
- Teach and reinforce social/emotional tools and strategies
- Developmentally appropriate sensory tools
- Flexible seating options
- Regular communication with families and outside support staff
- Frequent check-ins with students in regards to social emotional health
- Foster positive relationships

#### ORGANIZATION - EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING ACCOMMODATIONS

- Monitor management of student materials
  - o Cubby, desk, locker
  - Organizational System (Physical or Digital) (e.g., Binder, Drive Folder)
  - Backpack
  - o Agenda/Planner Check In
  - o Provide materials in digital form when applicable
- Time Management Tools
  - Break down assignments into manageable tasks with specific deadlines
  - Have student set reminders on devices when applicable
  - Utilize timers
  - o Provide explicit instruction in strategies for balancing work and break time
  - Provide developmentally-appropriate scheduling strategies for homework and extracurricular planning
  - Provide practice with accurately estimating time needed for work completion
  - Assist in prioritizing tasks for completion based on relevant criteria (due date, grade weight, interest, future goals, etc.).
- Organizational Tools
  - Practice tools that organize thinking/planning (checklists, labels, color coding).
  - Active reading strategies (Post-Its, annotating text, outline/summary)
  - Practice organizational structures for note-taking (Oxford, etc.) and provide templates when necessary to support student learning
- Community Connections

- Communicate Executive Functioning strategies with parents and encourage follow up at home
- Coordinate consistent systems of organization and accountability across subjects/team/grade
- Develop strategies for student self-advocacy

#### REFERRAL-BASED SUPPORTS

#### Title I

Title I is a general education program provided through a federal grant and funding is subject to change from year to year. Certified teachers provide the following services as deemed appropriate through the Student Intervention Team (SIT) process:

- Identification of students at risk
- Support within general classroom setting
- Teacher collaboration for instructional support
- Individual or small group instruction as needed
- Alternative strategies

#### **Reading Program**

Each of the schools, Elementary through High School, provide direct and systematic reading instruction as appropriate to improve achievement among students who are having difficulty and determined eligible through progress monitoring and/or the Student Intervention Team process. Some of the programs implemented are as follows:

- Early intervention assessments through nationally normed reading assessments
- Direct instruction in phonics and/or phonology
- Individual or small group instruction as needed
- Core reading/language arts
- Specialized Reading Program

#### **Math Support**

Each of the schools, Elementary through High School, provides math support through targeted experiences, as appropriate, to improve achievement among students who are having difficulty. Decisions for intervention are made through the Student Intervention Team process. Some of the programs are as follows:

- Individual or small group instruction
- Core math classes

#### Counseling

Guidance Counselors, school adjustment counselors, and school psychologists are available as needed to provide direct support and intervention as well as serve as a resource for teachers and families. Access to outside service providers is available as needed.

#### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/SUPPORT FOR STAFF

#### Mentoring/Induction

All mentors need to be trained because good teachers of children do not necessarily make good coaches for adults (603 CMR, 7.12 [b]). Mentors must receive training in skills of effective mentoring and strategies for supporting new teachers to be successful in a standards-based classroom. In the Easton Public Schools, training is managed at the district level to ensure the same quality of training for all mentors.

Elements of Mentor Training include:

- Role of a mentor
- Analysis of teaching strategies
- Observation skills
- Strategies for conferencing, reflection and feedback
- Diagnosing and analyzing classroom management issues
- Problem solving skills
- Reflective practice
- Using student work to evaluate and inform practice
- Understanding the evaluation system and administration's expectations

Districts are required to assign all new teachers a mentor within the first two weeks of teaching (603 CMR, 7.12 [2b]). Mentor assignments are not decided until after the new teacher is hired and his/her individual needs are considered in the match.

#### **Full Day Professional Development Days**

The Easton Public Schools and the Easton Educators Association have agreed to have 2 full days of professional development for all Unit A members. Paraprofessionals and ABA Techs attend one of the two days. The two days focus on goals and initiatives from the EPS Strategic Plan. The

#### **Early Release Days**

There is currently one early release day for staff in grades PK-5. Teachers utilize that time to look at student assessments and create placements for the next school year. Staff in grades 6-12 utilize two early release days to work on curriculum within their departments.

#### **Easton University**

Course offerings are put out four times a year for all staff. This internal professional development program provides graduate level courses, workshops, seminars, book studies, film screenings, and more that allow teachers and other staff to work collaboratively and primarily within the district to improve their understandings, share their best practices, and hone their craft. Each offering is designed to align with the goals identified in the District Strategic Plan and in individual School Improvement Plans. They are convenient for staff, less expensive than individual, off-campus sessions, and free to all personnel.

#### Workshops/Conferences

Staff members are allowed to request to attend workshops or conferences that support their individualized professional development plans. These workshops and/or conferences may be

held during the school day or outside of the school day. If funding is available, registrations will be paid by the district.

#### **Graduate Courses**

Staff members are encouraged to enroll in graduate courses at accredited institutions of higher education. Course work is normally for graduate credit beyond the Bachelor or Master degrees. Courses, including online courses, that are not graduate level courses or are offered by other professional development providers can be used towards Professional Development Points (PDPs) towards relicensure.

#### **Unit Writing**

The Easton Public Schools and the Easton Educators Association have agreed to allow Unit A members to meet twice during the school day during the year to work on curriculum units with their departments. Teachers are also allowed to work on curriculum units over the summer for compensation.

#### Collaborative, Consultant-based Professional Development

The District will contract with specialized consultants to work with targeted groups based on needs assessment data to provide specific academic, curricular, instructional, or SEL supports through an embedded, coaching framework. Support will be provided frequently utilizing a full year or multi-year model to observe, provide feedback, model, debrief, and collaboratively facilitate the creation of high quality action plans/implementation strategies.

#### FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

#### **General Communication**

- District Websites
- School Websites
- Classroom Webpages
- Email, phone and face-to-face contact
- Superintendent Newsletters
- School Newsletters
- Classroom/Teacher Newsletters

#### Family Involvement

- Parent Advisory Council (PAC, PTO)
- Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC)
- School Council

#### **Homework Support**

- Websites provide information on assignments, classroom calendars, & additional resources
- Online learning platforms support skill development beyond the school setting

#### **Progress Monitoring**

- Parent/Teacher Conferences
- Progress reports
- Report cards
- Ongoing communication from teachers

#### **Community Partnerships**

- Town of Easton Health and Community Services
  - Community Engagement and Programming
  - o Community Health and Paramedicine
  - Health Department
- Easton Police Department
- Easton Fire Department
- Recreation Commission
- Ames Public Library
- Human Rights Committee
- Department of Commerce
- Raising Multicultural Kids
- Old Colony YMCA

#### **Parent Education**

- Easton Community University
- Afterschool and evening presentations

### **Acknowledgements**

The Easton Public School DCAP Committee:

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**Assistant Superintendent** 

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