

Hadley Public Schools

District Curriculum Accommodation Plan

**Hopkins Academy
Hadley Elementary School**

**District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP)
Hadley Public Schools**

Massachusetts General Laws requires a District Curriculum Accommodation Plan in each school district. The intent of the provision is to assist administrators in planning and providing a general education program that is able to accommodate students' diverse learning needs and avoid unnecessary referrals to special education.

Chapter 71, Section 38Q1/2 of the Massachusetts General Laws provide:

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 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, 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.

Further, Section 59 C of Chapter 71, the statute on school councils and school improvement plans, provides:

The school council, including the school principal, shall meet regularly and shall assist in the identification of the educational needs of the students attending the school, and recommendations to the principal for the development, implementation and assessment of the curriculum accommodation plan required pursuant to section 38Q1/2.

Together, these two sections require that the DCAP be adopted by the district and individualized for each of its school buildings. The purpose is to improve the general education program for the benefit of all students.

District Practices to Meet the Needs of Diverse Learners

- Professional development opportunities are afforded to all teachers in the district: speakers, conferences, workshops and tuition reimbursement for college courses.
- Paraprofessionals are invited to participate in curriculum days and district sponsored workshops.
- Curriculum committees align the local curriculum in relation to state learning standards and assessment data.
- Teacher mentoring and collaboration occurs regularly. Specialists and general educators discuss medical, academic, social/emotional and behavioral issues.
- Speech/language, counseling, behavior support, occupational and physical therapy services are available to general education students.
- District and state assessment data are reviewed and used for programmatic improvement to enhance student achievement.
- Parental involvement is encouraged:
 - Scheduled parent/teacher conferences.
 - Daily, weekly and biweekly written communication when deemed necessary.
 - Phone conferences.
 - MCAS results presentation to parents/guardians.
- MCAS Education Proficiency Plans are developed.
- Conventional and assistive technologies are available to students.
- The district provides staff members with resources pertaining to current topics and research in education.
- Teachers provide differentiated instructional strategies to meet the needs of diverse learners.
- School Improvement Plans include goals and objectives to address the needs of diverse learners.
- The English Language Learners Policy includes identification, assessment and program information.
- Teaching Staff possess appropriate SEI endorsements.

Building Level PracticesHopkins Academy

- Monthly faculty meetings are held.
- The Middle School Team, including the special education teacher, meets daily.
- The Hopkins Academy School Council comprised of teachers, parents, community representatives, students and the principal review current plans and programs available to students at Hopkins Academy.
- Department meetings are scheduled to review assessments and curricula.

- Textbooks are current. Some textbooks are available on tape or CD.
- School subscribes to electronic audio books source.
- All students in grades 7-12 have access to IXL formative assessments and math support software.
- Teachers are available for before/after school tutorial sessions.
- A school to work counselor coordinates internships and job shadowing opportunities.
- All students in grades 7-12 have access to Naviance, including career and post-secondary interest inventory.
- Work-study career-based internship programs are offered through the guidance department.
- Paraprofessionals provide assistance to students in general education classes.
- Tiered educational supports are available to general education and special education students.
- Support services for students transitioning from 6th to 7th grade include step up day and peer mentors. Transition meetings are held for students with specific needs.
- All grade 7 students are enrolled in study skills and executive functioning courses.

Hadley Elementary School

- Monthly faculty meeting are held.
- The Elementary School Council comprised of teachers, parents, community representatives and the principal review current plans and programs available to all students at the elementary school.
- Common planning time for grade level teachers occurs daily.
- The principal conducts weekly progress monitoring meetings.
- Based on assessment scores and teacher observations, Title 1 reading instruction is offered to students in grades K-6.
- Title 1 School-Home Compacts are signed by students, staff and parents.
- Tiered systems of supports, both academic and behavioral, are available to all students.
- Universal screening and progress monitoring measures are administered to students in grades K-6. The results are used to determine appropriate interventions for students at-risk of not meeting grade level benchmarks.
- The Developmental Reading Assessment, DRA, is administered as needed.
- Student Success and Student-at-Risk Plans are developed for students in grades K- 6. Home and school interventions are included on the plans.
- The reading and mathematics series provide materials for differentiated instruction.
- School subscribes to electronic audio books source.

Responsibilities of the Principal

The principal shall implement the curriculum accommodation plan adopted by the district and required under MGL C. 71, 38 Q. Such plan shall detail efforts that have been made or will be made to meet the needs of diverse learners in the general education program. As part of his/her responsibilities, the principal shall promote instructional practices responsive to student needs and shall ensure that adequate instructional support is available for students and teachers.

Instructional support shall include remedial instruction for students, consultative services for teachers, availability of reading instruction at the elementary level, appropriate services for limited English proficient students, and other services consistent with effective educational practices and the requirements of MGL C. 71 B. The principal may consult with the administrator of special education regarding accommodation and interventions for students. Such efforts and their results shall be documented in the student record.

Additionally, if an individual student is referred for an evaluation to determine eligibility for special education, the principal shall ensure that documentation on the use of instructional support services for the student is provided as part of the evaluation information reviewed by the Team when determining eligibility.

Responsibilities of General Educators

General educators are now responsible for meeting the needs of students with diverse learning needs. Therefore, when a student is experiencing difficulty, the teachers must individualize instruction and implement learning accommodations that will enhance the student's ability to succeed. Ideally, with modifications and pedagogical changes, the teacher will observe improvement and additional assistance will not be warranted. There will be many occasions, however, when the teacher does not observe the student progressing and seeks input and support from the administration, teachers and specialists. When additional assistance is necessary, the teacher begins the pre-referral process, which is included after the classroom accommodations and strategies for teaching limited English proficiency students sections of this plan.

Classroom Accommodations That May Enhance Student Achievement

Attention

- Teach the student how to pay attention, be specific.
- Post the daily class schedule and class rules.
- Give the student preferential seating: away from environmental distractions, near peer role models.
- Incorporate student movement as appropriate: standing while working, moving to a different table or desk and functional breaks.
- Adjust assignments, which includes homework assignments, to match attention span: break assignments down into manageable steps or reduce the number of items. For example, assign only odd or even numbered items on a worksheet.
- Give both oral and written directions and ask the student to paraphrase.
- Assign one task at a time.
- Use a timer to show allocated time for assignment completion.
- Develop a teacher and student signal to cue attention.
- Write out homework assignments and check the student's agenda.
- Vary the method of lesson presentation.
- Establish a routine for handing in homework.
- Provide transition directions.
- Number (order) assignments to be completed.
- Provide a color-coded organization system appropriate for the student.
- Initiate a peer tutoring system.
- Provide the student with organizational aids.
- Allow the student to use the computer for written assignments.
- Change tone of voice when speaking.
- Allow intentional distractions or something acceptable to do with their hands during class: remove and replace the cap from a pen, quiet tapping, taping a pencil on the back of one's hand rather than the desk.
- Use specific rather than general praise.
- Provide reinforcers and change the reinforcers to maintain interest.
- Provide a place marker when reading.

Processing

- Provide clear directions.
- Simplify/shorten directions.
- Give both oral and written directions.
- Ask the child to repeat and explain the directions.
- Provide sequential directions: first, second, etc.

- Conduct orientation to the lesson: Let the students know clearly what is expected of them for a particular lesson, relate the expectations to previous lessons and highlight what the students will be able to do after the material is learned.
- Model the lesson tasks for the students and note problem areas in performing the new skills.
- Relate the new information to the student's prior knowledge.
- Provide guided practice.
- Review discussion questions prior to reading.
- Emphasize or repeat important information.
- Use verbal cues: "This is important" "Don't write this down."
- Provide the student with an essential fact list for studying.
- Ask the child to repeat the lesson objectives.
- Ask the student to summarize at the end of the lesson.
- Increase allocated time for oral and written responses.
- Allow the student to move to a different location when working.
- Highlight important words and information.
- Provide frequent review of content.
- Provide the student with a copy of class notes.
- Provide the student with a lesson outline. Use the outline to teach outlining and note-taking skills.
- Provide the student with graphic organizers.

Fine-motor

- Provide pencil grips.
- Vary the working surface: desk to vertical surface, blackboard, chart paper.
- Provide the student with graphic organizers.
- Decrease the written work.
- Allow the student to dictate written work.
- Change far point to near-point material for copying.
- Provide the student with a copy of class notes.
- Allow the student to use the computer for written assignments.
- Have the student skip lines when writing on lined paper.
- Give the student graph paper to use during math computations.
- Provide the student with color-coded paper: red line on the bottom.
- Match lined paper to the student's print size.

Effective Strategies for Teaching Limited English Proficiency Students

- Provide frequent opportunities for interaction and discussion between teacher-student and among students.
- Use supplemental materials that support content objectives: manipulatives, pictures, visuals, demonstrations, adapted text, graphic organizers, etc.
- Link academic concepts to students' prior knowledge and experience.
- Emphasize English vocabulary by teaching vocabulary and content simultaneously.
- Speak at the students' proficiency level of spoken English.
- Provide the student with adapted materials: texts, assignments and assessments.
- Provide opportunities for students to practice and apply language and content knowledge in English
- Refer to the accommodations listed under processing in this plan.

Pre-referral Process

The process commences with the teacher discussing the student with the principal or designee and completing a pre-referral form. Forms include a description of area of concern, prior instructional practices, supports implemented in general education and results of the stated interventions. It is the responsibility of the principal or designee to schedule a meeting with the pre-referral team. The team usually comprises the principal or administrator, general educators, a special education teacher, a counselor, a school psychologist, specialists and may include the parent(s) or guardian. The team is referred to by various names: Child Study Team or Building Based Team. Regardless of the name, the purpose is to provide collaborative problem solving assistance to general education teachers.

At the meeting, the principal or designee is the primary facilitator and leads the team through the various stages. The first stage is to identify the problem. To clarify the problem situation, the meeting facilitator might ask the following questions:

- What is the area of concern?
- What interventions were implemented prior to the pre-referral process?
- What are the student's strengths?
- How long has this problem been observed?
- What is the discrepancy between the student's actual performance and grade level expectancies?
- Is the student's performance variable?

During the discussion, members review student records, assessments, work samples, behavioral observations and other miscellaneous sources. The data provides valuable information for identifying the problem.

After the problem is identified, the team proceeds to the problem analysis stage. Why is the student experiencing difficulty? The specific skill or performance deficits need to be identified for the remediation plan to be effective.

As in the problem identification stage, asking problem analysis questions will assist with the plan development. The principal or designee may ask questions pertaining to the following:

- What are the current performance levels?
- What factors are affecting the disparity between the student's achievement and expected performance?
- How does the identified problem impact the student's academic performance and perhaps behavior?
- What are the results of formal and informal assessments?

Team members should continue to review data and develop clarity of the student's problem before developing a plan.

Writing the intervention plan occurs after the team identifies the specific area(s) where improvement is needed. For intervention plans to be effective, the specific problem and reasons must be identified. A plan that suggests reading or mathematics difficulties is too general. The specific area of reading that is problematic must be stated. For instance, the plan might read, the student is fluent reading grade level text but is unable to comprehend the content in novels or textbooks. Additional information might include, the student can grasp the content when the information is presented orally. The plan may also include assessment data.

The Team collaboratively writes an action plan based on the specific area that needs to be addressed. The selection and implementation of interventions must specifically match the problem. The following questions may facilitate plan development:

- What is the specific goal(s) for the student?
- What specific interventions/instructions are necessary?
- Who is responsible for each intervention component?
- What setting is most conducive?
- When will the intervention plan begin?
- What will be the frequency and duration of the specific intervention and instruction?
- How long should the plan be in effect before the team reconvenes to discuss progress, plan revisions, and additional action necessary, such as a referral to special education?
- How will progress be measured?

Pre-referral plan interventions may include:

- Additional general education instruction with a teacher or a paraprofessional.
- Short-term programming in a learning center or environment outside the general education classroom.
- Behavior management programs.

- Classroom observations by the school psychologist, speech/language pathologist, physical therapist, occupational therapist and special education teachers.
- Teacher mentoring.
- Informal screenings completed by teachers and specialists.
- Increased communication between school and home.
- Developing learning accommodations.

The final stage, problem evaluation, occurs after plan implementation. It is essential that sufficient time be given before its effectiveness is evaluated. Data collection should be reviewed periodically to determine the student's progress toward goal attainment. The data collection will be discussed at the follow-up meeting scheduled 4 to 6 weeks after the plan is implemented.

At the reconvening meeting, the Team will determine if general education programming interventions are effective or if observations suggest a disability may be impeding progress. The results will be stated on *the Hadley School District Pre-referral Form*. If the strategies are effective, the plan continues or is somewhat modified. The Team may also conclude that the intervention plan is ineffective and recommend a referral for a special education evaluation.

The teacher(s) and/or specialist(s) will complete the special education referral form and submit to the building principal. The principal will review the referral request and forward to the special education office. The pre-referral form is submitted with the special education referral request for an evaluation. Pre-referral/instructional support strategies may not be used to delay a request for special education evaluation. This instructional support information, however, should be included in the student's record and considered by the Team when determining eligibility for special education.

The law requires that no instructional support program or any other intervention limit the right of a parent to refer a student for a special education evaluation. However, if a referral for a special education evaluation has been made and the district has requested and received parental consent to evaluate, then evaluation information from instructional support interventions should be available for review by the special education Team when determining eligibility for special education

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