Respect – Integrity – Excellence for All

TRITON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
District Accommodation Plan

What is a District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP)?

Massachusetts General Laws requires 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. Specifically, the DCAP is intended to aid teachers in identifying and accommodating the wide range of student learning styles and needs that exist in any school or classroom. By describing in a document the accommodations and instructional supports and strategies that are available in general education and the process for determining effective interventions for struggling learners, it is hoped that the DCAP will help support diverse learners in our schools.

> *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."*

Purpose of the DCAP:
- To assist general education teachers in analyzing, assessing, and accommodating diverse learners
- To highlight support services and instructional delivery options available within general education settings
- To note instructional interventions available for struggling learners
- To delineate resources available to teachers in the areas of student support, mentoring, professional development, and coaching

The following statements reflect the district's philosophy of teaching and learning:
- All students can learn and should have opportunity to reach their full potential
- Students have different rates and styles of learning
- Students are diverse in their cognitive, physical, linguistic, social, and emotional development
- Students differ in their ability to work and study independently
- Students will have different responses to curriculum, instruction, and assessment
- Students require different amounts and types of instructional support

The DCAP that follows is grounded in this philosophy of teaching and learning. It provides an accounting of resources and accommodations available to students and classroom teachers. In addition, the DCAP provides a process that each school follows in order to support struggling learners.

Tiered Instruction[1]

Triton schools strive to deliver instruction through flexible tiers which provide students with increasing levels of support that match their specific needs. Data from universal screenings, continuous progress-monitoring, and formative assessments are used to make instructional decisions throughout the tiered process.
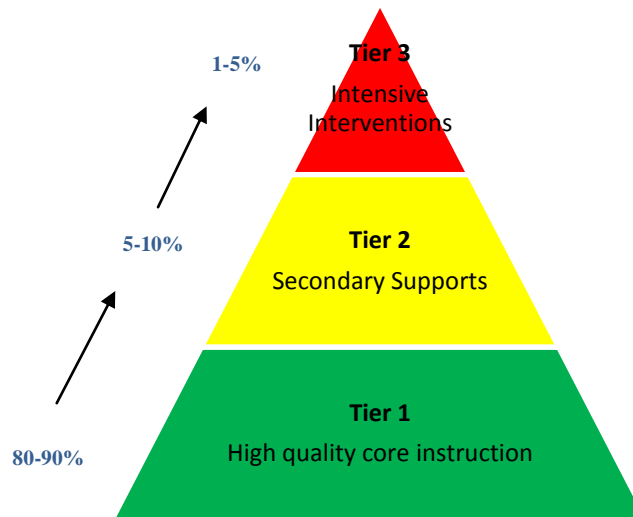
Tier 1 represents the core curriculum and instruction provided to all students. All students receive academic instruction and behavioral supports that include differentiation and extension activities. Eighty to ninety percent of the total student population learn key concepts, content and skills through instruction in this tier. Each school offers a high-quality core curriculum and instruction program that is effective, engaging, and developmentally appropriate.

Administrators, grade-level teams, and teachers within this environment work to ensure that they are teaching a core curriculum that is designed using state frameworks and that is vertically aligned through the grades. Teachers work to ensure that classroom instruction is differentiated to serve the needs of all students and that a method is used for assessing the effectiveness of the core curriculum on a routine basis. School personnel are skilled at providing large and small group differentiated instruction aligned with individual students' developmental levels and learning needs.

Since reading is critical to building knowledge across content areas, responsibility for students' literacy development must be shared within schools. While teachers of English language arts hold a special role in literacy development, teachers in other areas have an important role in literacy development as well. In a tiered model, all teachers are responsible for using their content area expertise to help students meet the challenges of reading, writing, speaking, and listening in their respective disciplines.
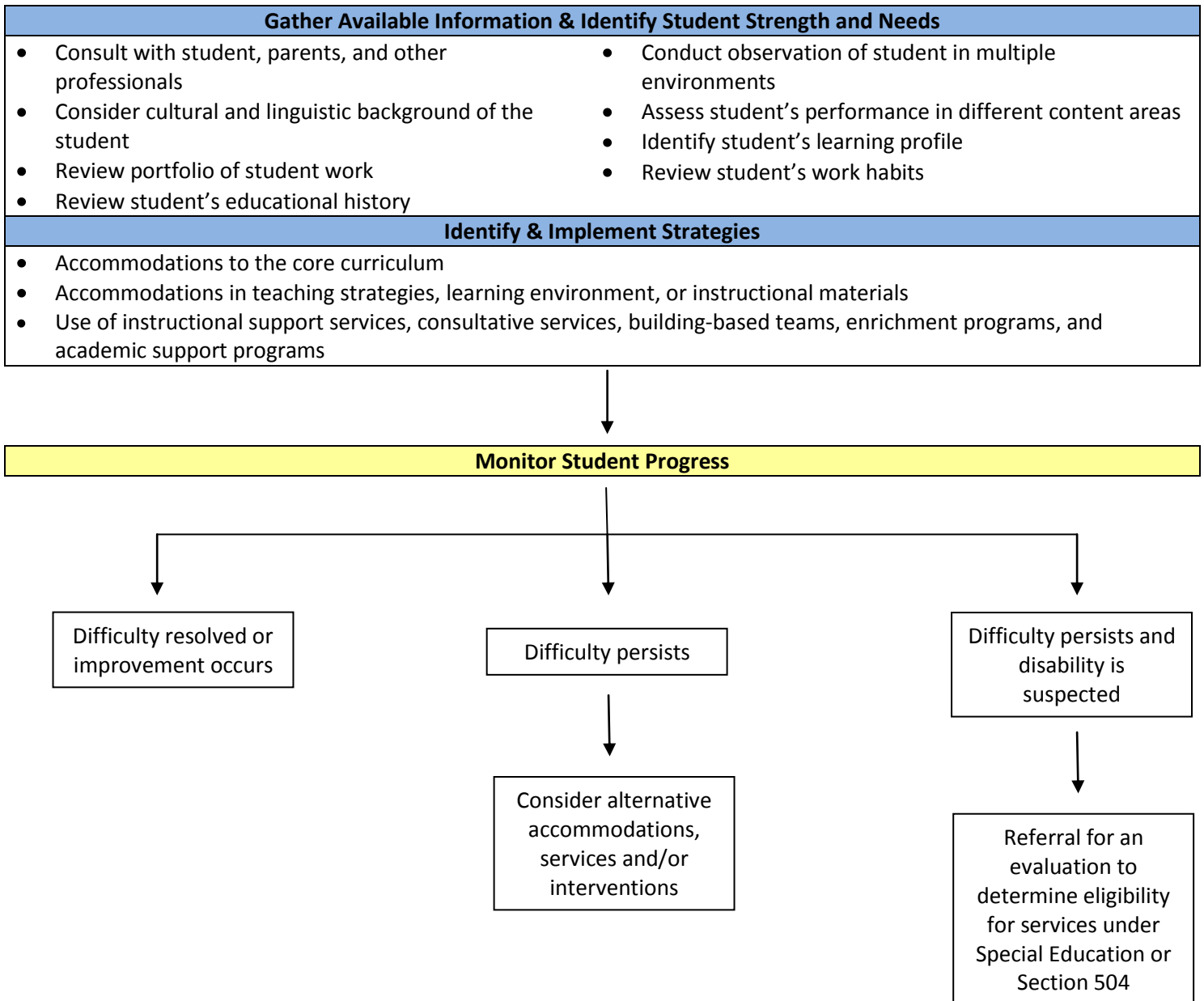
In the tiered model, universal screening procedures and data collection systems are used to identify, as early as possible, those students needing additional support in mastering key academic and behavioral concepts and skills. Once students are identified as being at risk of not meeting grade-level expectations, they are provided targeted, short-term interventions. This quick response will allow students to learn the essential skills all successful learners must acquire to be able to access fully the core curriculum.

Tier 2 provides students with research-based interventions through targeted small group work or extra instructional time. These interventions enhance, support, and provide access to the core curriculum and are provided in addition to the core instruction. Five to ten percent of the total student population receive instruction through supplemental interventions in this tier.

[1]Adapted from The Massachusetts System of Tiered Instruction guidance document http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/docs.html

Tier 3 provides intensive interventions to students who are at substantial risk of not meeting grade-level expectations. These students are identified through universal screening, progress-monitoring, and assessment data. Intense interventions are provided to struggling learners for longer periods of time, and the students' progress is monitored with increased frequency. These interventions are provided in addition to the core instruction. One to five percent of the total student population receive instruction through these intensive interventions.

Intervention process for a student who is experiencing difficulty[2]:

Gather Available Information & Identify Student Strength and Needs	
• Consult with student, parents, and other professionals • Consider cultural and linguistic background of the student • Review portfolio of student work • Review student's educational history	• Conduct observation of student in multiple environments • Assess student's performance in different content areas • Identify student's learning profile • Review student's work habits
Identify & Implement Strategies	
• Accommodations to the core curriculum • Accommodations in teaching strategies, learning environment, or instructional materials • Use of instructional support services, consultative services, building-based teams, enrichment programs, and academic support programs	

Monitor Student Progress

Difficulty resolved or improvement occurs	Difficulty persists	Difficulty persists and disability is suspected
	Consider alternative accommodations, services and/or interventions	Referral for an evaluation to determine eligibility for services under Special Education or Section 504

[2]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 asked for and received parent consent to evaluate, the evaluation information from the instructional support program should be made available to the special education team to consider when determining if the student is eligible for special education or accommodations under Section 504—keeping in mind that there are different eligibility criteria for these two processes.

District and School Systems of Support

Core instruction in the regular education classroom provides a rich educational experience for all students. The district is committed to maintaining strong core instruction so that all students are adequately supported to access and benefit from the core curriculum in the general education classroom. Schools strive to make the regular education classroom an appropriate placement for all students.

Working together, general and special educators provide support to each other to address student learning needs. As a result, learning is supported through a clearly defined curriculum, differentiated instructional practices, and varied programs and services geared to individual student needs.

Below is a list of systems and structures in place to assist teachers and leaders in addressing varied student needs in the regular education classroom.

> Assistance to regular education classroom teachers, such as professional development that will help them analyze and accommodate various students learning needs.

- New Teacher Orientation
- Teacher Mentoring Program
- District and School-Based Professional Development
- Instructional Support Team (IST)
- Grade-Level Meetings
- Faculty Meetings
- School-Based Data Teams
- Content and Team Leaders (middle)
- Program Coordinators (high)
- Reading Recovery Teacher (PGS)
- Reading and Math Specialists
- Team Chairs
- Teacher selected Professional Development
- Differentiation Specialist
- English as a Second Language Specialist
- Sheltered English Immersion
- Adjustment and Guidance Counselors
- Diagnostic screenings (i.e. Kindergarten Screening, DIBELS, DRA2, AIMSWeb, GRADE, etc.)
- Common Assessments
- Mid-Term Exams
- Curriculum Maps
- Curriculum Review Teams

> Support services that are available to students through general education, including services to address the needs of students whose behavior may interfere with learning.

- Peer Mediation
- Conflict Resolution
- Second Step (elementary)
- Responsive Classroom (elementary)
- Student Council
- Behavior Plans
- 504 Plans/IEP's
- Counseling (Adjustment and guidance counselors, school psychologist, social worker, etc.)
- Morning, Community, or Classroom Meetings (elementary)
- Functional Behavior Assessments
- IST
- After School Programs including Tutoring
- Student Support Center (high)
- Math and Reading Intervention Classes (middle)
- English as a Second Language Services
- Academic Support Services (high)
- Academic Support Classroom (high)
- Interventions delivered by Reading and Math Specialists (elementary)
- Interventions delivered by Title I Staff (SES)

Systems, structures, and frameworks to support direct and systematic instruction in reading for all students.

- District K-6 Balanced Literacy Framework
  - Word Study
  - Guided Reading
  - Independent Reading
- Fundations (elementary)
- Leveled Readers
- Reading Specialists
- ELA Curriculum Maps
- After School Programs
- Reading Recovery (PGS)
- Title I Reading Teachers (SES)
- Reading Interventions
  - Leveled Literacy Intervention (SES)
  - Just Words (SES)
  - Scholastic Guided Reading System – Non-Fiction (SES)
  - Fundations Double Dose (elementary)
  - The Comprehension Toolkit (SES, TMS)

- Reading Interventions (cont.)
  - Great Leaps (NES)
  - Read Naturally (NES)
  - Explode the Code (PGS)
  - Scholastic Sprint Reading (PGS)
  - Flex Period - Reading (TMS)
  - Academic Support Class (THS)
  - Academic Support Services (THS)
  - Credit Recovery/Plato (THS)
- Reading Assessments
  - DRA2, DIBELS, DAZE/MAZE, GRADE (elementary)
  - GRADE (TMS)
  - Mid-Terms and Final Exams
- Sheltered English Immersion & English as a Second Language Instruction
- Differentiated Instruction

Efforts to support teacher mentoring and collaboration.

- New Teacher Orientation
- Teacher Mentoring Program
- PD for New Hires
- Elementary Grade Level Team meetings
- Middle School Team meetings
- Department meetings (THS)

- Collaboration and co-planning with specialists
- School-Based Data Teams
- District Networking Meetings (e.g. reading specialist meetings, math specialist meetings, etc.)
- Study groups, faculty meetings, etc.

Efforts to encourage parental involvement on the child's education.

- School Councils
- Open Houses
- Parent/Teacher Conferences
- PTAs
- SPAC
- Parent Information Nights (Pre-K and Kindergarten)
- District Committees (e.g. Technology Committee, Wellness Committee, etc.)
- Connect Ed messaging system

- School-Based Committees (Homework Committee, Safety Committee, etc.)
- Parent Surveys
- Title I Parent Information Evenings
- Curriculum Nights
- Triton Now Newsletter
- District and individual school web pages
- Report Cards and Progress Reports
- Student performances

Accommodations and Instructional Strategies to Assist Students in Accessing the Core Curriculum
Below is a list of accommodations that support access to the core curriculum. This list is not intended to be exhaustive but rather highlights possibilities.

Organizational Strategies

- Provide agenda
- Clear homework recording system
- Frequent progress reporting
- Clear and consistent instructions and expectations
- Break assignments into small, clear steps
- Number/order steps for task completion
- Provide templates and models
- Provide due dates for separate steps
- Well managed transitions

Motivational Strategies

- Have goal-setting as an all class activity
- Determine student interests and learning styles and then design flexibly activities accordingly
- Build student contracts and allow the student to determine contract requirements
- Avoid marking responses that are wrong instead highlighting those that are right
- Provide the student with formative feedback within the classroom

Behavioral Strategies

- Change seating
- Provide incentives
- Develop behavior plan/charts
- Define clear and consistent
- Frequent communication with parents
- Allow student to see counselor when needed
- Develop student/teacher contract
- Be mobile around the teaching space

Assessments

- Provide study guides
- Provide alternative assessment options (ex: allow for oral assessment)
- Preview test vocabulary/concepts
- Extended time if needed
- Administer test in short periods
- Provide examples of proficient work

Instructional Strategies

- Multi modal presentation of information
- Hands on learning activities
- Include transition cues
- Break tasks into smaller units or chunks
- Provide wait time for responding to questions or formulation discussion thoughts
- Use technology assisted instruction
- Minimize assignments requiring copying
- Use rubrics
- Record lectures/discussion for reply
- Provide models and templates
- Use vocabulary/word banks
- Reduce assignments for copying tasks
- Repeat or re-teach key concepts
- Frequent checks for understanding
- Scaffold
- Don't assume prior knowledge
- Teach vocabulary
- Provide an overview of the lesson before beginning

Attentional Strategies

- Change activities frequently to accommodate short attention spans
- When lecturing, talk for no more than five minutes and then have a student-directed activity and check for understanding
- Plan varied activities during class period including at least one that allows for movement
- Give directions and information in small units
- Establish relevancy and purpose for learning by relating to previous experiences
- Shape approximations of desired behavior by providing direct reinforcement such as praise or immediate feedback for correct answers
- Seat student close to teacher
- Make a positive personal comment every time the student shows any evidence of interest
- Make frequent checks for assignment progress/completion
- Give advance warning of when a transition is going to take place
- Use physical proximity and touch to help student refocus
- Provide an overview of the lesson before beginning

Modifying the Presentation of Material

- Break assignment into segments of shorter tasks
- Use concrete examples of concepts before teaching the abstract
- Relate information to the student's experiential base
- Reduce the number of concepts presented at one time
- Monitor the student's comprehension of language used during instruction
- Schedule frequent short conferences with the student to check for comprehension
- Provide consistent review of any lesson before introducing new information

- Allow student to obtain and report information utilizing: cassette recorders, dictation, calculators, typewriters/computers, interviews, and fact sheets
- Highlight important concepts to be learned in text of material
- Monitor the rate at which material is presented
- Give additional presentation by varying the methods using repetition, simpler explanations, more examples, and modeling
- Require verbal responses to indicate comprehension
- Give frequent reminders of homework assignments
- Provide clear, concise directions and concrete examples for homework assignments
- Assign tasks at an appropriate reading level
- Allow for the oral administration of tests
- Check assignment sheet for accuracy

Modifying the Environment

- Seat student in an area free of distractions
- Use preferential seating (please specify individual child preference for optimal learning)
- Help keep student's work area free of unnecessary materials
- Use checklists to help the student get organized
- Frequently check the organization of the student's notebook
- Monitor the student's use of his/her assignment book
- Check the assignment book for accuracy
- Provide opportunities for movement
- Organize to simplify transitions and collaborative activity

Modifying Time Demands

- Increase time allowed for completion of tests or assignments
- Reduce the amount of work or length of tests
- Prioritize assignments and/or steps to completing assignments for the student
- Space short work periods with breaks or change of tasks
- Consistently follow a specific routine
- Alternate quiet and active tasks
- Set time limits for specific task completion

Modification of Materials for Students With Specific Concerns

Visual Motor Integration and Written Expression Problems

- Reduce the amount of copying from text and board
- Allow student use either cursive or manuscript
- Set realistic and mutually agreed upon expectations for neatness
- Let student type, record, or give answers orally instead of writing
- Avoid pressures of speed and accuracy
- Provide copies of notes
- Accept key word responses instead of complete sentences

Visual Processing Problems

- Highlight information to be learned
  Keep written assignments and workspace free from extraneous and/or irrelevant distractions
- Provide clear and well-defined worksheets
- Go over visual task with student and make sure student has a clear understanding of all parts of the assignment from the beginning
- Avoid having student copy from the board
- Have student verbalize instructions before beginning task
- Avoid crowded, cluttered worksheets by utilizing techniques such as blocking (blocking assignments into smaller segments), cutting (cut worksheets into sections), folding (fold worksheets into sections), and highlighting, color coding, or underlining

Organizational Problems

- Provide an established daily routine
- Provide clear rules and consistently enforce them
- Contract with student and use rewards for completion of contract
- Check the student's notebook to ensure the use of dividers, assignment sheet, and calendar
- Provide due date on written assignments
- Provide a specific place for turning in completed assignments

Language Processing Problems

- Give written directions to supplement verbal directions
- Slow the rate of presentations
- Paraphrase information
- Keep statements short and to the point
- Avoid use of abstract language such as metaphors, idioms, and puns
- Keep sentence structures simple
- Encourage feedback from student to check for understanding
- Familiarize student with new vocabulary before beginning the lesson
- Reduce the amount of extraneous noise such as conversation, radio, TV, outside noises, etc.
- Alert student's attention before expressing key points
- Ensure the readability levels of the textbooks are commensurate with the student's language level
- Utilize visual aids such as charts and graphs
- Utilize manipulative, hands-on activities whenever possible
- Always demonstrate how new materials relate to previously learned information
- Cue students by calling their names before asking questions

Use of Groups and Peers

- Utilize cooperative learning strategies when appropriate
- Assign a peer helper to check understanding of directions
- Assign a peer helper to read important directions and essential information
- Assign a peer tutor to record material dictated by the student

Assisting the Reluctant Starter

- Give a personal cue to begin work
- Give work in smaller units
- Provide immediate reinforcements and feedback
- Introduce the assignment in sequential steps
- Check student for understanding of instructions
- Check on progress often in the first few minutes of work
- Provide time suggestions for each task
- Provide a checklist for long detailed tasks

Dealing with Inappropriate Behavior

- Establish clear and concise classroom expectations and consequences with class
- Consistently reinforce expectations
- Avoid the use of confrontational techniques
- Provide student with alternatives
- Designate a "cooling off" location within the classroom
- Assign activities which require some movement
- Use praise generously
- Avoid power struggles
- Ignore attention-getting behavior for a short time
- Avoid criticizing the student in front of others
- Communicate frequently with parents
- Monitor levels of tolerance and be mindful of signs of frustration
- Speak privately, without the audience of peers, to student about inappropriate behavior