



Maynard Public Schools

District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP) revised January 2024

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.”

Non-Discrimination Statement

The Maynard Public Schools strives to provide a safe, respectful, and supportive learning environment in which all students can thrive and succeed in its schools. The Maynard Public Schools prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation and ensures that all students have equal rights of access and equal enjoyment of the opportunities, advantages, privileges, and courses of study.

Introduction to the Massachusetts Tiered System of Support (MTSS)



Massachusetts has developed a blueprint outlining a single system of support that is responsive to the academic and non-academic needs of all students. This blueprint, the **Massachusetts Tiered System of Support (MTSS)**, provides a framework for school improvement that focuses on system level change across the classroom, school, and district to meet the academic and non-academic needs of all students, including students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are academically advanced. It guides both the provision of high-quality core educational experiences in a safe and supportive learning environment for all students and academic and/or non-academic targeted interventions/supports for students who experience difficulties and for students who have already demonstrated mastery of the concept and skills being taught.

All students receive academic instruction and behavioral support that include differentiation and extension activities and are guided by the three **Universal Design for Learning** principles

1. multiple means of representation,
2. multiple means of action and expressions, and
3. multiple means of engagement.

The MTSS blueprint describes the flexible tiers (1,2,3), academic and non-academic core components and school and district system of supports. The flexible tiers represent a robust and responsive educational environment that provides students with a continuum of multiple supports to meet their needs. The tiers represent increasing intensity of academic and non-academic support and interventions. There is flexibility of the system and the programming to allow movement between the tiers (to both a more or less intensive type of support/intervention). To ensure that students eligible for special education services are able to fully access the system of tiered support, relevant information from their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) is to be incorporated into the design and implementation of instruction and assessments in all tiers.

Maynard Tiered System of Support (MTSS) - the foundation for the DCAP

The Maynard DCAP Tiered System of Supports, including those listed below, represent all the three tiers and can vary in intensity and group size. In general, individual work is Tier 3, small group work is Tier 2 and whole class group a Tier 1. Please note that assigning a Tier label to a specific support is not the goal of a DCAP. The DCAP is to assist in the discussion and planning of support to maximize student progress. Please note that you, as the professional, don't have to start with a Tier 1 intervention when a Tier 2 or Tier 3 intervention is clearly justified. All three Tier levels can be found in each of our schools and will look different depending on the grade of the student and their particular needs. The use of the Building Based Support Teams (BBST) , Case Management Teams (CST), grade level teams, subject specific departments and parent conferences are the primary avenues for a complete discussion regarding student needs

Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Practices

Across Massachusetts, our student population is becoming increasingly diverse. Our education system is steeped in norms, traditions, and a lens that too often do not reflect and may not be supportive of this diversity. All students, families, and communities should have access to schools that believe this diversity is an asset and reflect, include, and sustain their cultural and linguistic backgrounds. In Maynard we have seen a rise in students whose home and / or native language is not English as indicated on Home Surveys at the time of registration. The Maynard Tiered System of Support, including this DCAP, is applicable to all students. Established screening and testing practices contribute to our knowledge of each student's needs and supports to ensure progress.

In order to be highly effective, educators must develop an authentic understanding of the students and adults in their school communities, ensure that their students' experiences in school are affirming of who they are and what they bring to the school community, and unpack how their own culture impacts their worldview and approach.

Culturally and linguistically sustaining practices are essential for all students in the classroom, regardless of their background, culture, or identity. All students benefit from an approach that is intended to meet the needs of diverse learners; from expanded cultural competence and sociopolitical consciousness; and from explicit instruction in the functions of language.

Culturally responsive learning environments are where culture and identity are viewed as assets and valuable resources, including students' race, ethnicity, or linguistic assets, among other characteristics.

Educators should promote a school and classroom environment that is not only respectful of all cultures, but one that leverages student culture to improve and deepen learning. Like culturally sustaining practices, linguistically sustaining practices (Lucas, 2010) promote multilingualism as an asset and honor the linguistic resources students bring to the classroom.

In order to build linguistically sustaining learning environments, educators must get to know their students by understanding their linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Linguistically sustaining practices (Lucas, 2010) rely on a research-based understanding of how students acquire language, including but not limited to an understanding of language acquisition as a socially-mediated process; of distinguishing conversational proficiency from academic proficiency; of the impact of an affective filter on learning; and of the importance of utilizing language skills in one's home language when learning a second language.

Leveraging their understanding of their students and the process of language acquisition, educators unpack the language expectations embedded in classroom tasks and design scaffolds and explicit language instruction that provide all students access to rigorous content. Language is taught through content, and language is used and developed in many ways in a classroom: "to interpret and present different perspectives, build awareness of relationships, and affirm their identities (WIDA Guiding Principles of Language development, citing Cummins, 2001; Esteban-Guitart & Moll, 2014; May, 2013, Nieto, 2010)."

Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy

1. Affirms and values students' cultures, prior experiences, and linguistic resources to make learning more relevant and effective, while building community and developing student agency.
2. Promotes teaching and learning principles of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy of academic achievement, cultural competence, and sociopolitical awareness; a framework that "not only addresses student achievement but also helps students to accept and affirm their cultural identity while developing critical perspectives that challenge inequities that schools (and other institutions) perpetuate" (Ladson-Billings, 1995).
3. Values multilingualism as an asset and honors multilingual learners' languages to be leveraged, learned, and sustained through meaningful engagement in activities that are valued in their homes, schools, and communities.

Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy calls for schools as places that should be "sustaining—rather than eradicating—the cultural ways of being of communities of color" through:

- Critical centering on dynamic community languages, valued practices, and knowledges
- Student and community agency and input
- Content and instruction that acknowledges the histories of racial, ethnic, and linguistic communities
- Contending with internalized oppressions, and
- Educators to be able to "curricularize" (or adapt curriculum to) those learning settings.

"Being and becoming a culturally sustaining educator is dynamic; it's about critically learning with community; it's about, together, sustaining who youth and communities are and want to be; and it's about doing all of that with respect and love" (Paris & Alim interview, 2017).

English Language Learner supports

- Students receive support in the English Language Education (ELE) program with certified EL teachers
- EL instruction focused on listening, speaking, reading, and writing in English.
- ACCESS annual assessment
- Professional development to improve existing curriculum and classroom instruction with EL
- EL Parent/Family (ELPAC) events held three times per year
- EL coordinator/public relations to assist with outreach
- Parent-teacher conferences with interpreters
- Individual and small group instruction to augment classroom instruction
- Use of technology to meet individual student needs
- Bilingual dictionaries and apps to assist with translation as needed

District-Wide Student Supports

- Universal Screening (ELA and Math)
- Twice per year assess each student's reading ability and progress in literacy skills (K-3)
- Differentiated and/or supplementary evidence-based reading instruction and progress monitoring (K-3)
- School Counselor, Adjustment Counselor and / or Psychologist check-ins for select students
- Building Based Student Support Teams (BBST)
- Case Management Teams
- Positive Behavior Support plans
- English Language Learner Instruction
- Adjustment counselor support and consultation with students, admin, staff
- Psychologist support and consultation with students, admin, staff
- Agency counseling for eligible students with students, admin, staff
- Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) support and consultation with students, admin, staff
- Differentiated Instruction
- Restorative Practice / Justice approach
- Curriculum and Technology Integration
- Section 504 Plans
- Parent / guardian conferences and consultations with teachers, related service providers and/or admin
- Technology Resources - Ipads, Chromebooks and related software
- Before and after school programming
- Grade level and / or subject level common planning time
- WINN (what I need Now) block
- NHS tutoring
- Small group counseling

District-Wide Teacher Mentoring & Collaboration

- District early release time
- New Teacher Induction Program
- Regular meetings with Mentor Teacher (new teachers)
- District School Year PD for instruction and collaboration including DCAP presentation and discussion

District-Wide Professional Development Opportunities

- In house Safety Care de escalation training by in house trained staff for all paraprofessionals
- Safety Care full training for select teachers and ABA's on the crisis team at each school
- Orton-Gillingham training by in house trained staff for select teachers
- Mental Health First Aid training for all staff
- Restorative Practice / Justice
- Tuition reimbursement
- Summer and during the year curriculum development opportunities - curriculum, mental health, DEI
- Professional Development Committee (educator offerings and tuition reimbursement)
- Job-embedded professional learning during faculty meetings, department meetings, and district early release time
- School Wide leadership team (including curriculum coordinators, grade level leaders, and administration) to design and implement professional development
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) introduction to mental health staff and monthly case consults
- Paraprofessional access to Master Teacher course catalog
- Consultation regarding english language arts instruction and support
- Special education training in current topics, compliance, new IEP forms for staff
- Title IX, 504 and special education current topics for administration
- Staff meetings at each school with specific areas of professional development including use of the DCAP as a resource

Adjustments to School Schedule

- WINN Block
- Addition of general education academic supports
- Course level adjustments
- Reduced credit load
- Access to online courses for credit recovery
- Weekend, vacation and extended school year credit recovery
- Virtual high school credit recovery options
- Dual enrollment

Parent/Guardian Involvement

- Two way communication via email, phone calls
- Virtual meetings
- Parent Meetings
- Back to School Nights
- Parent-Teacher Conferences
- Teacher websites/blogs
- Aspen Portal
- School Council
- School Committee Meetings
- Principal's Roundtables
- PTO
- ELPAC
- SEPAC
- Online interpreters
- Translation apps for phone use

State Learning Standards & Curriculum

- Ongoing curriculum review in relation to state standards, including common assessments as well as standardized tests
- Review of student outcomes and trends in relation to state learning standards
- Central Office Administrators, Directors and consultants assist principals and teachers with curriculum and instruction oversight, analysis of student achievement data, teacher assistance with curriculum modifications, curriculum resources acquisition and allocation

Instructional Support Strategies

Instructional support strategies include accommodations to the classroom instruction, student responses, teaching strategies, teaching environment or materials. This list is representative of suggested strategies and is not inclusive of all strategies that may be successful with individual students. Educators implement practices according to the developmental needs of the student, balancing necessary support with gradual release of responsibility (e.g. moving in the direction of greater student independence over time).

Curriculum/Instruction/Assessment Strategies

- Make expectations and goals of lessons and activities clear for students, including articulation of learning goals
- Identify key vocabulary and repeat that vocabulary often during a lesson
- Preview and review new concepts
- Provide varied opportunities for students to practice new concepts
- Provide students with regular opportunities to engage actively in instruction
- Draw on students background knowledge to connect to new information
- Simplify language to introduce new concepts
- Check for understanding
- Clarify directions or questions
- Provide directions and lessons in multisensory ways (visual, auditory, hands-on)
- Evaluate student understanding using multiple formats
- Check for all students' understanding frequently; monitor student progress and give students feedback
- Incorporate opportunities for student movement into lessons
- Provide cueing and “wait time” or “think time” to encourage participation
- Model expectations
- Use checklists, teacher check-ins, calendars, project organizers, or other strategies to break down larger or long-term assignments
- Provide multi-modal presentation of instruction and materials, including use of manipulatives and graphic organizers
- Repeat or re-teach concepts with a different approach
- Differentiate instruction and assessments
- Utilize alternative assessments: oral, multiple choice, computer-based, read aloud, except reading tests
- Frequent progress monitoring and feedback to student on progress
- Instruct students in study skills, note-taking; model these skills during instruction
- Utilize technology and computer assisted instruction
- Utilize “think out louds”, and conversation strategies to develop metacognitive skills
- Show examples of the finished products, and provide rubrics to communicate and reinforce expectations
- Provide and teach how to use manipulatives when necessary (counting cubes, number lines etc.)
- Provide modified workspaces or preferential seating when necessary (seating, location etc)
- Purposeful paired work or small group instruction
- Incorporate incentives and reward systems, including student graphing of own progress

- Utilize peer buddy systems for study groups or homework check-ins
- Utilize homework logs and journals; post homework in consistent location
- Provide study guides, reference tools, web sites and textbooks for homework support
- Station work
- Provide strategies to parents to support student learning and progress
- Allow extended time for those tests that determine a student's knowledge and mastery of content, but not fluency in the subject area
- Provide a scribe when needed to assess student knowledge
- Allow the use of word processing for assignments and assessments
- Explicitly teach reading and test-taking strategies

Behavioral / Emotional Support Strategies

- Individual and small group counseling
- Smaller classrooms with intensive supports
- Post hospitalization programming
- Chronic absenteeism credit recovery
- Post classroom expectations in view of all students
- Post a visual schedule/ provide individual ones when necessary
- Incorporate stress-release activities
- Include movement breaks and energizers during instructional periods
- Adjust classroom management strategies
- Arrange seating to prevent behavioral difficulties
- Remove distractions
- Develop logical consequences
- Develop student contracts or individual behavior improvement plans
- Utilize charts and graphs to monitor and assess student behavior
- Arrange classroom interventions by guidance or adjustment counselor when necessary
- Contact parents; facilitate parent support, strategies, and communication
- Consult with school psychologist, guidance counselor, adjustment counselor, special education staff
- Arrange classroom observations by school counselors, BCBA and school adjustment counselors as needed
- Arrange for outside agencies to use in house space to counsel students under their agencies care

Organizational Strategies

- Post a visual schedule, including agenda, objectives and homework (if applicable); provide individual schedules when necessary
- Clarify directions and expectations
- Use timers or reminders to help prepare students for transitions between activities/tasks
- Develop a system of cues for classroom attention
- Use consistent and familiar routines
- Provide and teach students how to utilize graphic organizers and visuals for planning
- Provide check-lists or task breakdowns for multi-step tasks
- Implement a frequent progress monitoring system with students
- Use cooperative learning strategies
- Provide strategies to parents

The list of DCAP strategies and interventions are neither exhaustive or static, and will expand based on student needs. The District administrative team meets weekly to discuss systems strengths and areas of needed improvement including tiered strategies and interventions.

Additional resources: Guidebook for Inclusive Practices <https://www.doe.mass.edu/eval/guidebook/>

Created by Massachusetts educators, the Guidebook includes tools for districts, schools, and educators that are aligned to the MA Educator Evaluation Framework and promote evidence-based best practices for inclusion following the principles of Universal Design for Learning, Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports, and Social and Emotional Learning.

Works cited

1. Ferlazzo, L., Paris P., Alim, H.S. (2017). Author Interview: 'Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies'. *Education Week*. [Author Interview: 'Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies' \(Opinion\) \(edweek.org\)](#)
2. Lucas, T., Villegas, A. M. (2010). The Missing Piece in Teacher Education: The Preparation of Linguistically Responsive Teachers. *Teachers College Record*, 112(14), 297–318.
3. Ladson-Billings, G. (2014). Culturally Relevant Pedagogy 2.0: a.k.a. the Remix. *Harvard Educational Review*, 84(1), 1–12.
4. WIDA Consortium. (2019). WIDA Guiding Principles of Language Development. *University of Wisconsin*. [WIDA Guiding Principles of Language Development \(wisc.edu\)](#)