



*District Accommodation Plan*

*Cohasset Public Schools*

*“The Commitment to Excellence Continues”*

*Supporting the Diverse Learning Needs of All Student*

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## **Introduction**

### **Why do we have a District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP)?**

Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 38Q1/2 states that 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.

### **Mass General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 59C:**

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, make recommendations to the principal for the development, implementation and assessment of the curriculum accommodation plan required pursuant to section 38Q1/2, shall assist in the review of the annual school budget and in the formulation of a school improvement plan.

### **What does a DCAP ensure?**

The Massachusetts Special Education Laws require school districts to implement DCAPs 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

## **The Cohasset Public Schools' DCAP**

The mission of the Cohasset Public Schools is to hold high expectations for all students and staff, and provide the support and resources that enable all to meet or surpass those expectations. We collaboratively support an academically challenging, safe, respectful and student-centered learning environment for students in preparing them to be responsible citizens of a global and digital twenty-first century environment.

In alignment with the DCAP, Cohasset teachers monitor student progress and implement supports to facilitate student learning and achievement. The district prioritizes early intervention and addressing student learning issues responsibly. The overarching objectives of the DCAP are as follows:

1. Work collaboratively with data, utilizing the fundamental aspects of the Massachusetts Tiered System of Support (MTSS) to encourage achievement of the high expectations the district holds for all students.
2. Employ Common Core Standards with fidelity and with support for student learning in an academically challenging learning environment.

This DCAP details procedures, programs, and supports available and implemented within the individual schools of the district. The DCAP describes both formal and informal routes. In some instances, communication between parents/guardians and teachers will be effective in identifying issues and agreeing upon strategies to be implemented. In other situations, teams of educators will be involved in the process and a more formal written plan may result. Family involvement is an important part of the process. 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. The following is provided in this document:

- **A list of sample strategies utilized to support all students**  
The list includes suggestions for accommodating concerns about academic progress as well as strategies and interventions intended to resolve social and behavioral issues. This includes an explanation of our frameworks for Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), as well as an explanation of our Response to Intervention (RTI) systematic approach to student support.
- **A listing of structures and sample accommodations for all Cohasset public school students**
- **A listing of the personnel providing specific consultation/support/intervention in the regular education setting**
- **A flow chart for decision making is included for the Instructional Support Team (IST) at each level**

## Strategies Utilized to Support All Students

The Cohasset Public Schools' utilizes various strategies that help to support all students:

- Professional Development: Supportive professional development includes assistance for teacher using Universal Design for Learning (UDL). The UDL framework is explained in the graphic below:

**Figure 1**

*Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Framework:*



Downloaded from: [http://udlguidelines.cast.org/binaries/content/assets/udlguidelines/udlg-v2-2/udlg\\_graphicorganizer\\_v2-2\\_numbers-no.pdf](http://udlguidelines.cast.org/binaries/content/assets/udlguidelines/udlg-v2-2/udlg_graphicorganizer_v2-2_numbers-no.pdf)

Other professional development offerings that assist teachers in the development of accommodations and interventions include: technology trainings, executive function trainings, teaching strategy trainings for teachers of English Language Learners (ELLs), and social-emotional learning (SEL) trainings. The graphic below explains the Collaborative of Academic and Social-emotional Learning (CASEL) SEL model that is the basis of Cohasset Public Schools' SEL programming.

Figure 2

CASEL's Social-Emotional Learning Competencies

### SELF-AWARENESS

The ability to accurately recognize one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior. The ability to accurately assess one's strengths and limitations, with a well-grounded sense of confidence, optimism, and a "growth mindset."

- IDENTIFYING EMOTIONS
- ACCURATE SELF-PERCEPTION
- RECOGNIZING STRENGTHS
- SELF-CONFIDENCE
- SELF-EFFICACY

### SOCIAL AWARENESS

The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds and cultures. The ability to understand social and ethical norms for behavior and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.

- PERSPECTIVE-TAKING
- EMPATHY
- APPRECIATING DIVERSITY
- RESPECT FOR OTHERS

### RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING

The ability to make constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on ethical standards, safety concerns, and social norms. The realistic evaluation of consequences of various actions, and a consideration of the well-being of oneself and others.

- IDENTIFYING PROBLEMS
- ANALYZING SITUATIONS
- SOLVING PROBLEMS
- EVALUATING
- REFLECTING
- ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITY

### SELF-MANAGEMENT

The ability to successfully regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in different situations — effectively managing stress, controlling impulses, and motivating oneself. The ability to set and work toward personal and academic goals.

- IMPULSE CONTROL
- STRESS MANAGEMENT
- SELF-DISCIPLINE
- SELF-MOTIVATION
- GOAL SETTING
- ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

### RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

The ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups. The ability to communicate clearly, listen well, cooperate with others, resist inappropriate social pressure, negotiate conflict constructively, and seek and offer help when needed.

- COMMUNICATION
- SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT
- RELATIONSHIP BUILDING
- TEAMWORK

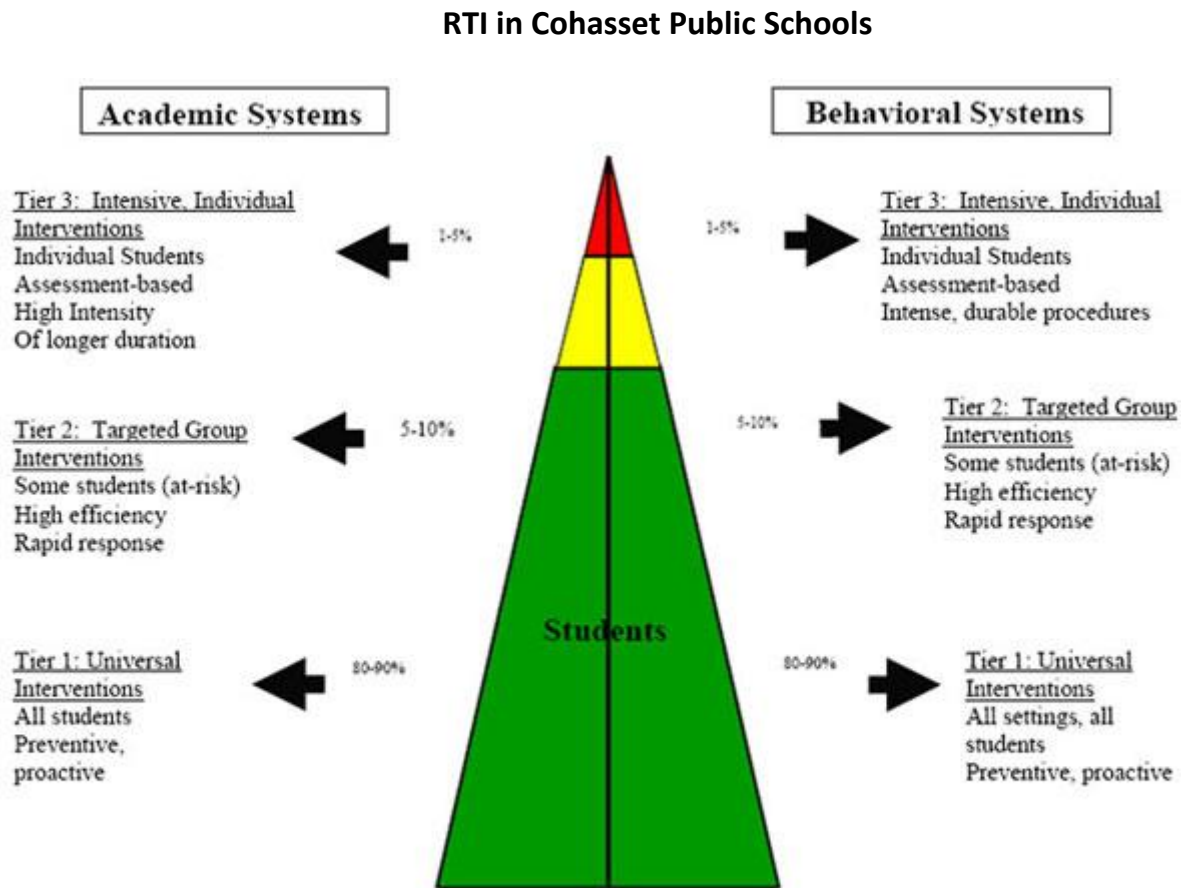


- Support Services – Services are available to students through the regular education program, including services to address the behavioral needs of students. Examples of these services include reading and Title I support; ELL support; paraprofessional support; library and technology support; nursing support; occupational, physical, and speech therapy, adjustment counseling and psychological consultation.
- Mentoring and Collaboration – This includes mentoring new teachers and common planning time at the elementary school level. All new teachers take part in a full-year comprehensive induction program.
- Family Involvement – This includes opportunities that encourage parental involvement in their children's education such as school councils, district leadership teams and parent/guardian organizations (such as the Parent-Student Organization (PSO) and Special Education Advisory Council (SEPAC).

- Building-based Response to Intervention (RTI) / Instructional Support Teams (IST), sometimes called Tiered Support Teams (TST) or Child Study, meet on a weekly basis and provide teachers the opportunity to collaboratively work together to establish interventions to meet the needs of all students. The Team consults with specialists who can provide important information and expertise to the general education teachers. Families are often a paramount part of the process as well. Establishing home/school connections is a strategy that is often implemented as a result of referral to the team.

**Figure 3**

*RTI in Cohasset Public Schools*



Adapted from *Response to Intervention: Policy Considerations and Implementation* (Batsche, et al 2005).  
 Note: Percentages are approximations and may vary by district.

Retrieved from: <http://www.rtinetwork.org/getstarted/develop/developingplan>

**Tier 1** intervention reflects a strong general education curriculum. Students who are not making adequate grade level progress will be target for more specific intense intervention in Tier 2. General education instruction will be taught by the classroom teacher. Universal screening will be administered by the Classroom Teacher and Specialists.

**Tier 2** represents those students who need more intensive and specific instruction in order to be successful in school. They will be provided with small group instruction in addition to the general



curriculum. These services will be provided either in the classroom or by instructional personnel. Progress will be monitored closely with research based interventions provided by Specialists.

**Tier 3** represents those students who do not adequately respond to the targeted interventions in Tier 2. Additional screening will be provided and these students will receive intensive interventions targeted to the skills at risk. Student/Teacher ratio will be smaller and more intensive instruction will be provided by identified, appropriate staff.

(Please see the *Response to Intervention Overview and Procedures in the Student Services Manual for additional information*).

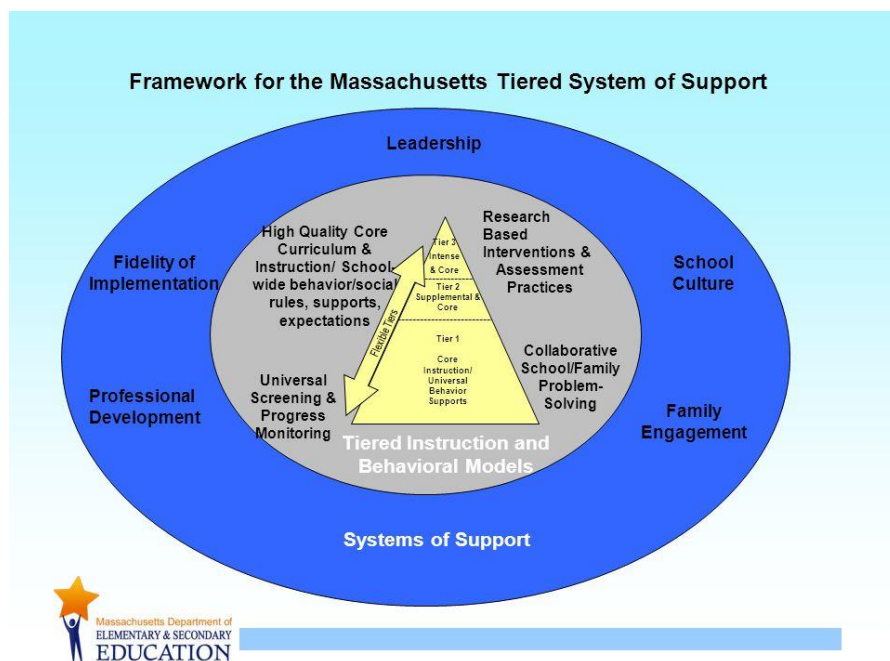
## Structures and Sample Accommodations available for all Cohasset Public School Students

### Structures

- A strong core curriculum based on the state's Common Core standards: balanced literacy (reading, writing, phonics, phonemic awareness, word study), mathematics, science and technology engineering, history and social studies, wellness (health and physical education) art and music
- Differentiation of instruction to include various learning modalities, including curriculum-based "academic choice" activities to meet the needs of **ALL** learners
- Use of formative and summative assessments and standardized testing data to assess achievement and to inform instruction through pre/post test score analysis
- Reasonable class sizes staffed by highly qualified personnel who demonstrate competency in the state's teaching standards
- Utilization of Massachusetts Tiered Support System (MTSS) model and processes,

Figure 4: *Framework for the Massachusetts Tiered System of Support* outlines the procedure:

**Figure 4**



- Provide inclusive classroom instruction co-taught with a highly-qualified special education specialist;
- Provide options for full-day kindergarten instruction and preschool instruction for diverse learners;
- Professional development for both professional and paraprofessional staff members to enhance instruction and student learning;
- Building-based cultural enrichment activities involving parents and community;
- Common planning time for staff at levels K-5;
- Standards-based report cards for grades K-5 based on common standards;
- Curriculum mapping of content and skills
- Multi-modal instruction
- Peer tutoring, mentoring or study buddy
- Agenda or student planner supervision/support
- General organizational skills
- Rubrics - clear expectations
- Posted visual supports
- Offer support with student transitions and facilitate communication between home and school including a full-time METCO coordinator;
- Provide support programs such as *Second Step* and *Advisor/Advisee* and *Response to Intervention*;
- Early Kindergarten screening and pre-school screening using *Brigance* Inventory;
- BRYT (Bridge to Resiliency in Youth Transitioning) program at the middle and high school. This program helps transition students who have missed longer periods of school back into the regular school routine;
- Utility Block at middle and high school

### **Sample Accommodations**

The accommodations listed below may be implemented as needed to support academic achievement for all students in the Cohasset Public Schools. These accommodations are general education interventions available to all students whenever appropriate. This is not intended to be an inclusive list but only a sampling of interventions that may be discussed at Instructional Support Team (IST) meetings and should be considered as integral to effective instruction for all students.

- Alternative assessments;
- Study skills strategies;
- Incentive rewards;
- Content area reading strategies;
- Individualized help;
- Small group instruction;
- Preferential seating;
- Social skills support;
- Contract learning;
- Individualized behavior management plans;
- Motor breaks, accommodated seating, proximity, break stations;
- Frequent/ongoing progress notes for families;
- Backward design;
- Enlarged text;
- Graphic organizers;
- Extended time on tests;
- Limited number of problems on assignment or test;

- Collaboration/consultation with related service specialists, i.e., counselors, speech/language, school psychologists, occupational therapist, physical therapist, nurse and administration

### **Personnel Providing Specific Consultation/Support/Intervention in the Regular Ed. Setting**

- Reading Specialists: Serve as teacher consultants for curriculum modification or accommodations, screening and informal/formal assessment(s), direct service to groups or individual students, demonstration classes, co-taught classes, reading resource materials;
- Title 1 Teacher(s): Provide direct support to identified students in target school;
- Library Support Staff: Available for consultation with teachers to determine resources for content specific materials, support for enrichment, and research;
- METCO Coordinator: Offers support and communicates with school and home;
- Technology Support Specialist: Supports both staff and students with hardware and software options/training;
- Occupational Therapists/Physical Therapists/Speech-Language Pathologists: Provide consultation to regular education staff. They may conduct classroom observations of students for the purpose of informal screening(s), consulting capacity;
- School Psychologist: Provide teacher consultation, referrals, and evaluations;
- Adjustment Counselors: Serve as liaisons between home, school, local social service agencies; provides parent/guardian and teacher support and consultation; small group facilitation, chairs Student Support Teams;
- Board Certified Behaviorist Analyst (BCBA): Provides behavioral interventions with students and management strategy support for teachers;
- Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Development: Provides supervision and development of learning and instruction as well as the professional learning and development of all staff and mentoring of new staff; responsible for academic grants;
- Director of Student Services: Provides leadership for all special education and non-traditional student needs; responsible for special education grants and out-of-district responsibilities;
- Nurses: Offer consultation to staff, training of personnel to enhance awareness of psychopharmacological effects and practice of universal precautions in student injury situations, direct service to individual students and staff, vision and hearing screening, serves on IST as needed;
  - Paraprofessionals: Assists teachers by performing a variety of tasks that promote student learning and well-being. Duties involve working with students individually and in small groups assessing performance, reinforcing instruction, motivating learning, assisting with classroom management, clerical, and other non-instructional work;
  - Principal : Provides articulation and modeling of vision and principles (for district and specific school), supervision and evaluation of staff, fostering of accommodations, philosophy, facilitating staff, collaboration and communication;
  - Building-based teams who analyze school and student data, problem solve student success issues, and develop School Improvement Plans to increase student achievement through Professional Learning Communities and Data Teams (looking at student work, determination of the essential question: *"What do we want students to know and be able to do in accordance with the Massachusetts Common Core State Standards?"*); then designing instruction and assessment tools to reach student learning goals;
  - Elementary level literacy teams, which analyze data and revisit instructional methodology and programs;
  - Math supports at the elementary level.

## Flow Charts for Decision Making for the Instructional Support Team (IST) at each level:

**Elementary School Process:** Figure 4 shows the Flow-chart for providing tiered-intervention at the elementary level

### Figure 5

*Flow-chart for Tiered Support Team (TST) at Cohasset Elementary Schools:*

<h3>What parents need to know about the Tiered Support Team</h3> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As a parent/guardian who may have concerns about your child's learning, your first point of contact at the Deer Hill School is the classroom teacher.</li> <li>• You should communicate to the classroom teacher any concerns that you have regarding your child's learning.</li> <li>• You and the classroom teacher will discuss ways that school and home can best support your child.</li> <li>• If the classroom teacher determines that additional resources are required, the child will be referred to the Deer Hill Tiered Support Team (TST).</li> </ul>	<h3>What is the Tiered Support Team process?</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classroom teacher refers student to the Tiered Support Team.</li> <li>• The TST meets, reviews information and discusses interventions.</li> <li>• The team will implement the interventions one at a time, over a defined length of time. Adults providing interventions will measure increases in performance due to the intervention.</li> <li>• Strategies are implemented for a 6-8 week trial period.</li> <li>• TST reconvenes after 6-8 weeks to assess progress and effectiveness of interventions.</li> <li>• If needed, interventions are either continued or modified for another interval period.</li> <li>• When effective progress is made, interventions will continue until your child no longer struggles.</li> <li>• If interventions make a difference, then a more intensive intervention will be implemented by the team.</li> <li>• This process could go on for several intervention periods.</li> </ul>	<h3>Who participates in the Tiered Support Team:</h3> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General Education Teacher</li> <li>• School Adjustment Counselor</li> <li>• Reading or Math Specialist, Speech and Language Pathologist, and other specialists as needed.</li> </ul> <hr/> <h3>When is a referral to the Tiered Support Team made?</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A student is referred to the TST team when a classroom teacher has academic, social or behavioral concerns that are impacting the student's classroom performance.</li> <li>• The classroom teacher, after discussing with the student's parents, meets with the TST team to collaborate and to discuss possible classroom interventions and strategies.</li> </ul>
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**Cohasset Middle-High School Process:** Figure 5 shows the Flow chart for providing tiered-intervention at the Cohasset Middle-High School

**Figure 6**

*Flow-chart for Tiered Support Team (TST) at Cohasset Middle-High School:*

