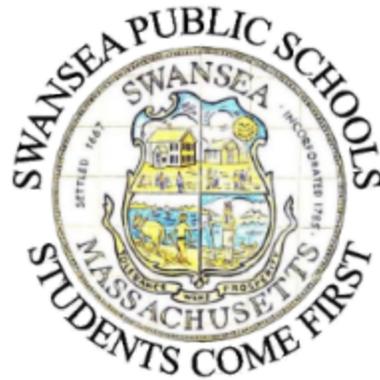# Swansea Public Schools

District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP)

Updated December 2018

Table of Contents

Mission Statement

To provide opportunities and pathways in a safe, supportive and technology-rich environment that engage, challenge and inspire students to achieve college and career readiness and to contribute to our 21st century community.

Vision Statement

Public education in Swansea is a collaborative effort among staff, faculty, students, parents and the community; we seek to challenge, inspire and bring the joy of learning to all students. Guided by our Core Values, we will provide all students opportunities to become lifelong learners who excel academically, socially and personally. Our goal is to empower students to contribute actively to the civic, moral and economic spirit of our diverse democratic community and society.

Core Values

Sharing communication among all stakeholders

Working collaboratively with the community

Authentic learning opportunities

Nurturing, safe educational environments

Strengthening higher order thinking skills

Engaging students as active learners

Accountability in academic excellence and integrity

What is a DCAP?

DCAP stands for "District Curriculum Accommodation Plan." Districts are required by Massachusetts General Law to have a DCAP and a recent amendment includes the role of school councils in the DCAP. Language directly from the law is below.

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."

School Councils and District Accommodation Plan, Ch. 71 Section 59C -Amended Language

"The school council, including the school principal, shall meet regularly and shall assist in the identification of the educational needs of all students attending the school, shall 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 is the purpose of the DCAP?
- To assist general education teachers in analyzing, assessing, and accommodating diverse learners within the classroom
- To identify services, support, and instructional delivery options available within general education settings
- To document instructional interventions available for learners
- To outline resources available to teaching staff in the areas of student support, teacher mentoring, curriculum differentiation, professional development, and coaching
- To provide a list of accommodations as a resource to meet the needs of a variety of learners

How does the DCAP help teacher instruction and practices, students, and parents?

The DCAP is a great resource to identify techniques/accommodations that can be provided to all students in the general education classroom. No two students are the same; we accommodate and differentiate our instruction and curriculum to meet students where they are. It is expected that across content areas and grade-levels, students will need various levels of supports. Needing accommodations does not mean a student is at-risk in their learning; all individuals vary in their needs based on content, age, development, social/emotional wellbeing, external factors, and more. The DCAP can be a reference and resource to school staff, as well as a resource for parents to see the wide range of supports that their students can receive within the general education setting, and clarifying the difference between regular accommodations that can be provided to students and those more significant accommodations and modifications that require an IEP or 504 plan.

The Swansea Public School District works to ensure that every effort is made to meet individual students' needs within the general education program. This District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP) is designed to assist principals, staff, and teachers meet the needs of diverse learners within the general education classroom. The plan will assist the general education classroom teacher in analyzing and accommodating diverse learning styles of all children in the classroom and in providing appropriate services and supports within the general education program.

This assistance will include, but not be limited to:

- Direct and systematic instruction in math/reading in the elementary grades
- Provision of services to address the needs of children whose behavior may interfere with learning
- Teacher mentoring and collaboration
- Parent involvement

A variety of data sources are used to analyze students' learning needs, including, but not limited to:

- Fountas and Pinnell Reading Benchmark Assessment System (BAS) Reading A-Z
- Group Mathematics Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation (GMADE)
- Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS)
- District and other Curriculum based assessments

Resources that may provide specific consulting/support/intervention in the general education setting

➢ School Counselors (SAC's & School Guidance): Liaison between home and school, parent and teacher support and consultation; direct services to groups or individual students; formal assessments.

➢ OT/PT/Speech/Language Specialists: Teacher consultation, classroom observations of students, informal screening, parent/home consult.

➢ Media Specialist (Library): Consultation with teachers regarding resources, support for enrichment/research

➢ Nurses: Consultation to staff, communication and consultation with parents, direct service to individual students and staff, vision and hearing screening; develop and manage a health care plan.

➢ ELL Coordinator: Consultation to staff, classroom observations, staff training

➢ Pre-Referral Teams: Review of staff, principal, and parent concerns for specific students

➢ Principal: Articulation and modeling of vision and principles, supervision and evaluation of staff, fostering of accommodation philosophy, facilitating staff; collaboration and communication.

➢ School Resource Officer (SRO): Police Department liaison, individual student or parent support and consultation, referral where appropriate.

➢ Technology Assistants: Support with hardware and software.

➢ Title 1 Reading Teachers: Consultation with teachers regarding resources; direct services to groups or individual students

➢ Academic Interventionists: Consultation with teachers regarding resources; direct services to groups or individual students

➢ District 504 Coordinator: Consultation with teachers regarding resources

➢ Director and Assistant Director of Student Services: Consultation with teachers regarding resources; Staff training

Overview of Accommodations

Accommodations are ways to assist students in accessing the curriculum more effectively. Accommodations are provided within the general education classroom and may be available to any/all students. Such changes are made to provide a student with equal access to learning along with an equal opportunity to be able to show what he/she knows or can do. For many, the suggested list of accommodations found in each school's accommodation plan would simply be thought of as best educational practices. Accommodations typically fall under four key categories;

- **Setting (location)**
  - Examples include; small group, preferential seating, quiet location, etc.
- **Presentation (how the teacher shares information)**
  - Examples include; visuals provided for verbal information, preview/repeat, provide models, etc.
- **Timing (any consideration of time within the learning)**
  - Examples include; time of day, length of time, extended time for assignments, "chunking" into smaller parts, planning for time with student, etc.
- **Response (How the student responds back to show understanding)**
  - Examples include: use of graphic organizers, alternative writing utensils, access to keyboarding, limit number of repeat question types, etc.

Accommodations do **NOT** change the instructional level or content and/or performance criteria. These latter changes are called modifications or "specially designed instruction" and those are only appropriate for students on an Individualized Education Program (IEP.)

Accommodations

Accommodations, instructional and assessment strategies are designed to assist students in accessing the core curriculum below is a list of accommodations that support access to the core curriculum.
MCAS numbered Accommodations UF= Universal Accessibility Features, DF= Designated Accessibility Features

**Please note that state assessments may not allow for the use of some accommodations found in this plan.

Accommodations include, but are not limited to, the following:

Setting (location)

- Small group setting for instruction and/or testing (Up to a total of 10 students) *DF1*
- Individual (one to one) test administration (Testing in a separate setting) *DF2*
- Separate or alternate test location *DF4*
- Seating in a Specific Area / Preferential Seating *DF5*
- Adaptive or Specialized Furniture *DF6*
- Use of Noise Buffers *DF7*
- Use a variety of grouping strategies including flexible skills groups
- Utilize listening centers
- Vary instructional groupings throughout lesson (whole class, small group, partner, individual)
- Familiar Test Administrator *DF8*

Presentation (how the teacher shares information)
- Multi modal presentation of information
- Use a wide variety of curricular and instructional materials
- Hands on learning activities
- Provide wait time for responding to questions or formulation discussion thoughts
- Use technology to assist instruction
- Access to copies of notes, PowerPoint presentations, etc.
- Provide models and templates
- Preview, repeat or re-teach key concepts
- When reviewing or re-teaching vary methods using repetition, simpler explanations, more examples, and modeling
- Frequent checks for understanding
- Build background knowledge within lessons
- Teach new vocabulary/review previously taught vocabulary
- Provide an overview of the lesson before beginning
- Utilize developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically sensitive materials
- Colored overlay/Alternative background and font color *UF2*
- Use of Magnifier tool/device *UF3*
- Use of Audio Aids *UF8*
- Test administrator reads aloud selected words (except on assessment measuring Reading) *UF10*

Timing (any consideration of time within the learning)

- Allow for extended time if needed on tests or assignments
- Administer test in short periods
- Monitor the rate at which material is presented
- Minimize use of timed tests
- Frequent Supervised Breaks *DF3*
- Testing during specific time of day *DF10*

Response (How the student responds back to show understanding)

- Reduce the amount of homework assigned
- Fill-in-the-blank options instead of writing a whole assignment
- Provide alternative assessment options (ex: allow for oral assessment)
- Student reads test aloud to self *DF9*
- "Stop Testing" Policy *DF11*
- Use of Highlighter *UF1*
- Use of Tracking device *UF4*
- Answer Masking *UF5*
- Answer Eliminator *UF6*
- Use of Placemarker/Item flag *UF7*
- Use of Notepad *UF9*

Instructional and Assessment Strategies

Assignment and Assessment Strategies:
- Preview test vocabulary/concepts
- Provide examples of proficient work
- Clarify test directions
- Provide alternative assessment options (ex: allow for oral assessment)
- Provide a variety of question types
- Use vocabulary/word banks
- Break tasks into smaller units or chunks
- Use of rubrics to provide clear expectations for student output
- Assign tasks and assignments at appropriate reading level
- Individualize spelling/vocabulary lists
- Keep good models and samples of written work visible for reference

Organizational Strategies:
- Provide agenda
- Provide an established daily routine
- Clear homework recording system/teacher check-ins
- Clear and consistent instructions and expectations
- Instructions provided through multiple modalities (visually, verbally, pictorial, etc.)
- Break assignments into small, clear steps
- Number/order steps for task completion
- Provide templates and models (exemplars)
- Provide due dates for separate steps (chunking)
- Well managed transitions
- Accessibility to schedules (visual)

Writing Strategies:
- Revisions/Editing (utilizing peer and teacher feedback to revise piece)
- Provide alternative vocabulary to often "over-used" words (word lists, thesauruses)
- Instruct the use of graphic organizers
- Provide resources/visuals to enforce proper use of mechanics
- Use of technology, computer or iPad
- Fill in the blank paragraph
- Provide a checklist of writing mechanics

Mathematics Strategies:
- Use of calculator, number lines, multiplication tables, or reference sheets (when doing so would not modify curriculum)
- Access to hands-on manipulatives during classwork and assessments
- Provide sample problems
- Reduce the number of similar problems assigned
- Access to graph paper or lined paper held vertically

Fine Motor/Visual Motor Integration Strategies:
- Reduce the amount of copying from text and board, provide copies of notes
- Let student type, record, or give answers orally instead of writing
- Highlight appropriate writing lines to assist with proper letter formation
- Provide letter strips as models for appropriate letter formation
- Use of smaller writing utensils, broken crayons, pencil grips, etc.
- Use larger-spaced, larger-lined paper Increase white space or provide graph paper for math work
- Place a green dot on the left side of the paper indicating where to begin
- Use of a slantboard (can use a binder)
- Pencil Grip
- Scribe

Visual Processing Strategies:
- Keep written assignments and workspace free from extraneous and/or irrelevant distractions
- Go over visual task with student and make sure student has a clear understanding of all parts of the assignment from the beginning
- Provide students one page to complete at a time rather than a comprehensive packet of papers
- Avoid having student copy from the board
- Avoid crowded, cluttered worksheets and testing materials 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

Language Processing Strategies:
- Give written/pictorial directions to supplement verbal directions
- Slow the rate of presentations
- Paraphrase information
- Keep statements short and to the point, one step directions
- Avoid use of abstract language such as metaphors, idioms, and puns
- Check for understanding, ask student to repeat back directions
- Familiarize student with new vocabulary before beginning the lesson
- Gain student's attention before expressing key points
- Utilize visual aids such as charts, graphics, and graphs
- Cue students by calling their names before asking questions
- Provide choices for student responses rather than open-ended questioning
- Make them aware they will be called on and provide opportunity to listen to other student responses first

Social/Emotional Strategies:
- Allow student to see counselor/support staff when needed
- Monitor levels of tolerance and be mindful of signs of frustration
- Communicate changes in routine (schedule and staff) ahead of time, when possible

- Supported student groupings
- Prepare students prior to calling on them in class
- Use token systems for preferred activities or time away from academic tasks

Motivation Strategies:
- Determine student interests and learning styles and then design flexible activities accordingly
- Avoid marking responses that are wrong, instead highlight those that are right
- Provide the student with formative feedback within the classroom
- Provide a classroom job/responsibility/opportunity to be a role model or leader
- Identifying a familiar adult/space where the child can go to act as a "helper"
- Praise expected behavior

Attention Strategies:
- Ask students to repeat directions or explain directions in their own words
- Change activities frequently to accommodate short attention spans
- Plan varied activities during class period including at least one that allows for movement
- Give directions and information verbally, written, and visually
- Seat student close to teacher or away from distractions
- Help keep student work area free of unnecessary materials
- Make frequent checks for understanding and assignment progress/completion
- Break larger assignments into smaller steps with teacher check-ins or intermediate breaks
- Use nonverbal cues to help student refocus
- Access to fidgets, sensory tools, seat cushions, etc.
- Checklists for task completion
- Use visual timers
- Access to alternative work areas (corral, individual desk away from distractions, etc.)

Glossary of Terms

Accommodation: An accommodation is an adjustment to instruction or the environment that allows the student to access the curriculum as delivered in the general education environment. The assumption is that the student can participate in the general education curriculum with these adjustments to allow him or her to access the instruction.

Strategy: A strategy is a way of providing instruction and support used for any student as part of the general education program. A strategy is assumed to be available to all students as part of the process of presenting instruction that meets the varying needs of students within the classroom. It is the various instructional approaches used by all educators to support all students in the classroom.