ASHLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

David Mindess Curriculum Accommodation Plan
2010-2011

Introduction

The David Mindess School is dedicated toward meeting the diverse learning needs of its students. Every effort is made to identify individual learning presentations and to utilize strategies designed to maximize the student's learning potential. A variety of instructional methodologies, educational strategies, and academically sound techniques are employed to support and encourage a philosophy of life-long learning.

Although most learners present with a combination of learning strengths and relative weakness, the goal of the district staff is to develop and sustain the best functional system of learning. Techniques which address visual, auditory, and tactile learners are often mutually effective and beneficial to all learners.

The Curriculum Accommodation Plan recommended represents a starting point for the professionals and is not designed to be the sole process to meet every student's need. The elementary school recognizes that each situation needs to be assessed and accommodated on a case-by-case basis. Professional expertise is combined with the parental knowledge of the individual student. Through this collaborative effort, the student's learning profile can best be identified and an effective educational plan can be developed. It is expected that additional resources, professional consultations, ongoing professional training, and colleague collaboration will be utilized in addressing students' needs.

In-Class regular Education Modification and Accommodation:

When a student is identified as having an unfulfilled learning need, the classroom teacher will seek available resources, specialist and teacher consultation, parental input, and professional expertise to clarify the learning challenge. Together they will develop and implement strategies and educational techniques that are designed to remediate or accommodate the learner's individual needs. This program will incorporate any regular educational resources that are available and will take into consideration any known educational history or individual information that may be educationally relevant.

Student Support Team (SST) and Response to Intervention (RTI):

The Student Support Team (SST) is designed to assist the classroom professionals in the development and implementation of additional strategies and accommodations by applying the Response to Interventional model. Interventions follow a three tier system of actions with carefully documented results. The team bases its decisions and recommendations on data collected before, during and after each intervention. Interventions vary in scope and depth. For example, students in the elementary grades

who present with specific needs may be recommended to receive regular education services such as remedial reading, after school tutoring support and school counseling. Formal and informal assessments and program participation would require parental permission and parent support. The Student Support Team may also serve as a pre-referral forum for individuals whose presenting needs have not responded to nor been remediated after Tier I, Tier II and Tier III interventions.

Team Referral: 504 or Special Education

Some students' individualized needs exceed the available resources within the regular education setting accompanied by tiered interventions and the student is referred to the appropriate evaluation Team. Students with an identified or observed physical, emotional, learning or health challenges may require specialized services, equipment, or situational-specific considerations. The information acquired through the RTI process regarding the student's needs, an assessment of implemented accommodations/modification, and all other related information available will serve as the foundation for a Team referral.

Once assessed, the student must meet the eligibility criteria for the statues governing the 504 and/or the Special Education process. When appropriate a 504 Accommodation Plan or a special education Individual Education Program will be developed and proposed by the school. Parent input throughout this process will be a key component, and parental acceptance of the specialized plans or programs will be required before recommendations can be implemented. Accommodations/modifications that are appropriate to the regular education setting will continue to be implemented in conjunction with any recommended program or plan.

Instructional Support Services

Preliminary Steps
When a child is identified with a relative weakness, the classroom teacher, along with identified specialists, will develop and implement strategies designed to remediate the area of identified need(s). Classroom teachers are encouraged to consult available resources, and access in-service opportunities such as resource texts, available records, colleague consultation, consultation with parents and previous grade level teachers, specialists and administrators.

Instructional Support Process
Students in elementary school who present with specific needs such as lack of adequate performance, excessive absences, and social or behavioral issues may be recommended to receive one or more support services. The services will be offered under general education and will require parent involvement regarding permission to test and provide services. Once a referral has been received, the Guidance Counselor will schedule a Student Support Team (SST) meeting, including the classroom teacher and any other appropriate faculty. Under the Response to Intervention model, the possible outcome of

such a meeting may be a recommendation of no additional intervention, continued or enhanced classroom modifications, and/or referral to a regular education service such as remedial reading or guidance services.

Modification of Instruction and Materials
Modification of instruction and materials is frequently the appropriate recommendation to meet individual student needs. The type and extent of modifications will be determined by the Student Support Team, 504 Team, or Special Education Team. Suggested modifications are provided as a resource.

A. Modifying the Presentation of Material: Instructional Accommodations:

1. Break assignment into segments of shorter tasks (chunking).
2. When content mastery is questionable, investigate the use of concrete concepts BEFORE teaching abstract.
3. Relate information to student's experience base.
4. Reduce the number of concepts introduced at any one time.
5. Provide student with an overview of the lesson BEFORE beginning the lesson (pre-teach). Tell the student what the student should expect to learn and why.
6. Monitor the level of language you use to communicate ideas. (Simplify, rephrase, and clarify.)
7. Schedule frequent, short conferences with the student to check for comprehension (reauthorize).
8. Provide consistent review of any lesson BEFORE introducing new information.
9. Allow student to obtain and retain information utilizing: cassette/tape recorders, computers, interviews/oral reports, projects, calculators, dictation, typewriters, etc.
10. Highlight important concepts to be learned in text or material (color code key points; outline; use study guides, graphic organizers).
11. Space practice and drill sessions.
12. Monitor the rate in which you present material (pace rate of delivery and quantity of materials).
13. Give additional presentations: Repeat original presentation
                                          Provide simpler more complete explanations
                                          Give additional examples
                                          Model skills in several ways
                                          Offer multi-modality approaches
14. Utilize progress reports (daily, weekly, random periodic).
15. Recognize and give credit for student's oral participation in class.
16. Make arrangements for homework assignments to reach home with clear, concise directions.
17. Assign tasks at the appropriate level (lower reading/difficulty level).
18. Give tests orally.
19. Use color coding or highlighting to help clarify directions, expectation.
20. Modify quantity of responses in favor of quality responses when performance demonstrates skill or concept mastery.

21. Provide for motor free or reduced opportunities.
22. Provide appropriate auditory or visual cues.
23. Identify the priority, or level of importance, of assigned tasks.
24. Identify marking rubrics, or focus of marking priorities, of individual assignments.
25. Alter size or type of font utilized in instructions or text.
26. Allow the student to rehearse designated responses prior to being called upon in group setting.
27. Use graphic organizers.

B. Modifying the Environment: Modifications:

1. Use student carrels; provide a distraction free, or reduced, setting.
2. Use advantageous seating (close proximity, freed from peer distracters, alter direction in which the student is facing).
3. Provide more than one study site that can be situational selected by student (two desks, reading table, reading corner, etc.)
4. Provide seating options: use of a bean bag to enhance sensory input, allow for back supports).
5. Provide a clutter free environment (empty desk, free of unnecessary materials/books).
6. Use a checklist, or graphic organizers, to help student get organized.
7. Develop and maintain regular routines or schedules.
8. Use notebooks, or designated folders, to organize assignments, materials, and homework.

C. Modifying Time Demands

1. Increase amount of time allowed for completing assignments/tests.
2. Reduce amount of work or length of tests (as opposed to allowing time, prioritizing assignments).
3. Teach time management skills (use checklists, prioritizing time, and prioritizing assignments).
4. Space short work period with breaks or change of tasks.
5. Set up a specific routine and stick with it.
6. Alternate quiet and active time (short periods of each).
7. Give student a specific task to perform within specific time limits.

D. Modifying the materials

1. Visual Motor Integration
   a. Modify quantity of written requirements (class work and homework).
   b. Encourage student to select preferred method of writing that is more comfortable for them (cursive, manuscript, keyboarding).
   c. Set realistic and mutually agreed upon expectations—for neatness.
   d. Use adult scribes.

e. Provide motor free or reduced opportunities: let the student type, record, or verbalize responses.
f. Provide student with copies of study guides.
g. Reduce quantity of near point, or far point, copying.
h. Adjust assignment for student's individualized motor speed and accuracy.

2. Visual Processing
a. Highlight information to be learned (color coding, highlighting, italic, etc.).
b. Keep written assignments and workspace free from extraneous or irrelevant distracters.
c. Utilize appropriate contrast between print and background of written documents.
d. Printed documentation needs to be clear and well defined.
e. Review visual task with student and confirm his/her clear understanding of all parts of the assignment BEFORE beginning.
f. Chunk, or divide tasks into smaller portions.
g. Use a white erasable board, or chart paper, with colored markers and clearly read print.
h. Utilize graphic organizers.

3. Language Processing
a. Give written directions to supplement verbal directions.
b. Slow rate of presentation.
c. Simplify language used in instructions.
d. Keep statements short and to the point.
e. Avoid use of abstract language (metaphors, idioms, puns, etc.).
f. Keep sentence structures simple; gradually introduce more complete sentences as student comprehension increases.
g. Provide enhanced opportunities for skill checks and repetition.
h. Encourage student rephrasing or clarifying instructions to check comprehension and level of understanding.
i. Pre-teach and clarify new vocabulary prior to lesson.
j. Reduce extraneous auditory distracters (conversation, TV, radio, hall noises, etc.).
k. Identify salient points: "This is important. Listen carefully."
l. Provide materials and text that is at the student's comfortable reading level.
m. Utilize visual cues to supplement verbal information (charts, graphics, pictures, etc.).
n. Provide enhanced opportunities for hands-on activities, multi-modality approaches and manipulatives.
o. Establish concrete experiences prior to teaching more abstract concepts.
p. Provide learning opportunities that are relevant to the student's general base of knowledge such that the taught material has comprehensive meaning.

q. ALWAYS connect new learning with previously mastered skills.

4. Organizational
   a. Establish daily routine and attempt to maintain it.
   b. Make clear rules and be consistent enforcing them.
   c. Provide notebook with organized sections such as: assignments due with calendar, homework, time management schedules, study guides, class notes, and prioritized to-do lists.
   d. Avoid cluttered, crowded worksheets by utilizing techniques such as:
      Blocking – block assignments into smaller segments;
      Cutting – cut worksheets into fourths, sixths, or eights and place one problem in one square;
      Folding – fold papers into fourths, sixths, or eights and place one problem in one square color coding, highlighting, or underlining important information on which the student needs to focus.
   e. Hand out written assignments with expected dates of completion.
   f. To prevent misplaced assignments, provide student with pocket folders, notebooks, or trays in which he could immediately place his/her work.
   g. Set aside a specific time for cleaning desks, lockers, organizing notebooks, etc.
   h. Teach decision-making and prioritizing skills.
   i. Teach time management skills.

E. Grading

1. Individualize grading procedure.
2. Use narrative report in addition to the standard report card.