



**ROCKPORT PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
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## **Rockport Public Schools District Accommodation Plan**

### **Introduction**

Massachusetts General Laws, Ch. 71, Section 38Q 1/2 require the adoption and implementation of a district curriculum accommodation plan (DCAP). The purpose of the DCAP is to assist principals and teachers in ensuring that every effort has been made to meet the diverse learning styles of students in the regular education classroom. To this end, the DCAP serves as a guide to accommodating and analyzing student learning needs. In accordance with the statute, the DCAP also includes support for students whose behavior interferes with learning and for those who require systematic reading instruction, and supports teacher mentoring and collaboration and parental involvement.

Rockport's DCAP describes supports, services and personnel available to meet students' needs within the regular education setting. The plan reflects the commitment to accommodating diverse learners articulated in the school's mission statement and educational philosophy, and recognizes the role of all stakeholders – administrators, teachers, service providers and students - in achieving this goal.

### **The Rockport Public Schools DCAP has four main objectives:**

- To assist general education teachers in analyzing, assessing, and accommodating diverse learners
- To increase, through the DCAP's articulation, support services and instructional delivery options available within general education settings
- To recommend instructional interventions for struggling learners
- To delineate resources available to teacher in the areas of student support, mentoring, professional development, and coaching.

### **RPS Mission Statement**

Rockport Public Schools, in partnership with families and the community, provides a safe environment that fosters integrity, respect, and success. We promote intellectual curiosity and pride in achievement. We challenge all students to pursue academic excellence, develop interpersonal skills, and value civic responsibility. Students learn 21st century skills in order to fully participate in a diverse and ever-changing world.

### **RPS Philosophy**

The Rockport school community values the pursuit of knowledge, meets students at their own levels, and challenges all learners to reach their individual potential. We provide worthy role models, use positive reinforcement, encourage the development of self-awareness, good decision making, and effective problem solving skills. We support self-motivation, self-discipline, appropriate risk-taking, and the development of the responsible use of freedom. We value life-long learning and encourage learning and teaching as mutual processes. We collaborate and engage positively in cooperative and competitive situations, and are involved in the life of the school and broader communities. We value a nurturing environment where the buildings and grounds are in good repair, people extend themselves to support each other, needs are addressed on a case by case basis, individual differences are respected and new initiatives are welcomed.

It is with these statements in mind that this DCAP was designed. It provides an accounting of resources and accommodations available to students and classroom teachers. The DCAP provides a process that each school follows in order to support struggling learners. The DCAP includes a flowchart describing this support for struggling learners and how teachers can identify resources to support the learner.

Strategy	Description
Assistance to general education classroom teachers to help them analyze and accommodate various students' learning needs and to manage students' behavior	Professional development and classroom-based supports for teachers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum leaders, department heads, literacy specialists, and a math coach (K-8) to assist classroom teachers in problem-solving and analyzing instructional practice and student results</li> <li>• Building-based instructional support teams (IST) K-12 that convene regularly to provide instructional and behavioral intervention suggestions to teachers</li> <li>• Middle school teams meet regularly to discuss student needs and behavioral and instructional strategies</li> <li>• Guidance staff provide academic, behavioral, and emotional support to students</li> <li>• Grade level, department, and faculty meetings</li> <li>• New teacher meetings, including teacher mentor program</li> <li>• Book clubs, study groups</li> <li>• Consultation between specialists and general education staff members</li> <li>• Annual review of the DCAP for all staff</li> <li>• Annual review of the IST process for all staff</li> <li>• Design district-based professional development activities for the district in-service days that focus on curriculum alignment, instruction, and assessment.</li> </ul>
Programmatic supports and services that are available to students through general education, including services to address the needs of students whose behavior may interfere with learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leveled classes in grades 6-12</li> <li>• Individualized computer-based reading instruction and remediation</li> <li>• Small group reading and writing instruction and remediation</li> <li>• Courses in technology, visual and performing arts, grades K-5</li> <li>• Courses in languages, technology, visual and performing arts, grades 6-12</li> <li>• Targeted assistance program in English Language Arts and math, grades K-2</li> <li>• Online progress monitoring via math curriculum</li> <li>• Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS)</li> <li>• Social skills/bullying prevention program, grades TBD</li> <li>• Homework club, grades K-8</li> <li>• TASC (advisory) provided for students grades 6-12</li> <li>• Title I services in reading and math</li> </ul>

**Programmatic Supports and Services Available to Students in the Regular Education Setting**

**Support Personnel Available to Students in the Regular Education Setting**

- PK-12 School Psychologists/Counselors (two for elementary school, one for middle school, one for high school)
- Two high school Guidance counselors
- PK-12 Speech/language therapists (one for elementary school, one for middle/high school)
- Related Services: occupational and physical therapist
- School nurses
- Reading specialist
- Librarians
- K-12 math coach
- Community resources, as contracted by the district

## Curriculum Accommodations Recommended in the Regular Education Setting

Instructional Strategy	Student Output/Assignments and Organizational Skills
<p><b>Less Intensive</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Allow breaks</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Allow preferential seating</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Utilize cuing (transition and visual cues)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Repeat/clarify directions</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Prompt students to restate instructions in own words</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Give directions in short steps or smaller chunks</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Allow “wait time” for student responses</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Post class agenda (middle/high school)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide course syllabus or overview</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide preview and review of material</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Pre-teach vocabulary</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Connect new material to previously learned material</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Connect material to students’ experience</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide frequent checks for understanding</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Pre-teach and review assessment rubrics</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Reduce assignments requiring copying</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Develop alternate assessments</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Allow extended time on tests, when appropriate</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Give explicit prompts to recheck and evaluate work; utilize self-editing checklists</li> </ul> <p><b>More Intensive</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Reinforce reading strategies in all content areas</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Teach awareness of “signal words”(“a key feature,” “a major event,” etc.) in oral instruction and written text to help guide students’ studying</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use “thinking aloud” and brainstorming to model investigation and planning</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Flexible grouping</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Cluster grouping</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Experiment with different peer groupings (individual, pairs and small group)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Experiment with seating configurations and use of classroom space</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use technology-assisted instruction (Khan Academy, Youtube, etc.)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Highlight important concepts to be learned in text or material (orally, through highlighting and color coding, use color highlighting in word processed documents, etc.)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide multiple versions of content presented in different ways (via printed text, images, videos, oral presentation, manipulatives)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Vary presentation of information (written, visual, oral, kinesthetic, tactile)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Utilize manipulatives across the curriculum</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide oral/audio descriptions of printed text/images</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide copies of class notes, study guides and supplementary materials as needed</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Tape lectures/discussions for replay (grades 6-12)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Less Intensive</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Encourage students to rephrase directions</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Pair visual, auditory and written instructions</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Review strategies for organizing course materials</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Prompt students to record homework assignments</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Break assignment into segments or shorter tasks</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide interim deadlines for long term assignments</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Identify priority or level of importance of assigned tasks</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Shorten assignments or reduce workload</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide organizers for planning and task checklists to monitor progress</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide word banks, as appropriate</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide product models showing finished versions of targeted skill</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide access to online and printed reference tools</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide graphic organizers, templates and reference sheets</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Reinforce study and organizational/executive functioning skills</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Teach and reinforce test taking skills</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide options for extra credit</li> </ul> <p><b>More Intensive</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Allow students to expand orally on written responses</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> When appropriate, allow student to rehearse before delivering answer orally</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Teach time management skills; utilize timelines (checklists, calendars) to enable students to manage time effectively</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide templates to organize and structure work and to support process and product</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide process models showing step-by-step, “process steps,” including “think aloud” strategies</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Make available collections of completed products as instructional tools (past student work, teacher generated examples, “expert” work, etc.)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide glossary of words that includes photos and images to supplement text</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use peer editors/tutors/readers; when appropriate, provide access to a peer scribe</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use “tiered activities” with choice of level of difficulty with same activity or learning goal, emphasizing quality over quantity</li> </ul> <p><b>Most Intensive</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide before or after school help regularly</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Additional small group/1:1 instruction</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Co-teaching</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Peer tutoring/support (grades 6-12)</li> </ul>	
<b>Behavioral Strategies</b>	<b>Assessment</b>
<p><b>Less Intensive</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Post daily and/or weekly schedule</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Develop and maintain consistent classroom expectations and routines</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide positive reinforcement</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Incorporate movement breaks in instruction</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Remove distractions, change seating</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Allow frequent breaks</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Encourage student self-monitoring</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Increase student-teacher interactions</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Increase verbal reinforcement</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Increase tangible reinforcement</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Increase non-verbal reinforcement</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use student’s strengths and interests often</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Utilize existing behavior contracts, charts or tracking sheets</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Increase parent communication</li> </ul> <p><b>More Intensive</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Adjust classroom management techniques based on consult feedback</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Schedule meetings with counselor, teacher, student</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Alternate instruction with breaks and student-centered activities (“10/2” rule)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide one to one feedback to support student needs related to explicit goals and performance</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Facilitate peer feedback and critique</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Develop collaborative home/school relationship</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Consult with counseling staff</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Develop behavior plan with motivating incentives</li> </ul> <p><b>Most Intensive</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide a mentor (peer or adult)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide flexible, multiple means of formative assessment (“clickers,” exit slips, student reflections, project-based learning, portfolios, etc.)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide options to demonstrate skills using multiple media such as video recording, posters, graphic organizers, stories, songs, poetry, art projects, presentations, etc.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Integrate different means of assessment into development of written tests (essay, multiple choice, open book, open note, performance based)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Allow extended time on tests, when appropriate</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Allow students to expand orally on written responses</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Teach and reinforce test taking skills, including skills for standardized testing (MCAS, SAT, etc).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Allow retakes of tests and quizzes when appropriate (test, re-teach, retest)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide grading rubrics</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Read test aloud or allow test to be dictated to scribe</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Preview language of the test questions</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Administer test in short periods</li> </ul>
<b>Materials:</b>	<b>Technological</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Arrangement of material on page/reduced amount of visual information on the page</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Taped/books online</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Highlight test/study guides</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use supplementary materials</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use a marker to guide students’ reading</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Larger graph paper for math</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Pencil grips</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Allow use of personal laptops, digital recorders, etc.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide calculators</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Allow students to submit assignments electronically</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use computer-assisted instruction (Web <input type="checkbox"/> Quests, virtual field trips, communication groups, blogs, classroom networking, web inquiry projects,</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Assignment notebook/agenda</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Calculator</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Special equipment (i.e. FM monitor, computer, headphones)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use adjustable font size, color and background color</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Utilize partially filled in outlines to scaffold content</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide graphic organizers, outlines of texts, visual concept maps, templates, skeletal outlines and reference sheets to structure work and support process and product</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>online image galleries, online dictionary/thesaurus etc.)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Incorporate appropriate software into instruction (PowerPoint, Inspiration, Dreamweaver, etc)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Tape record/digitally record instruction</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide digital texts or books on tape, as appropriate</li> </ul>
<b>Remedial</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide frequent conferences with student to monitor progress and check for understanding</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide opportunities for additional review and practice</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Utilize peer tutoring</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Organize study groups</li> </ul>	

### **The Instructional Support Team (IST): An Overview**

The Instructional Support Team (IST) responds to various state and federal mandates regarding the provision of instruction support to students in the general education curriculum who have diverse learning styles. Specifically, state statute and regulations require that schools implement a curriculum accommodation plan developed by the district's general education program to ensure that all efforts have been made to meet the needs of diverse learners and that schools "[promote] instructional support services responsive to student needs and ensure that adequate instructional support is available for students and teachers" in the general education curriculum. The law also requires that these efforts are documented and kept in the student record. The Massachusetts Department of Education reviews districts' ISTs and means of providing instructional support to students during its monitoring of compliance with state and federal civil rights requirements (See MGL c. 71, Sec 38Q 1/2 ; 603 CMR 23.03 (3)).

The IST is a process that enables teachers to meet collaboratively to share their expertise with one another in the effort to assist students who are experiencing academic difficulties accessing the curriculum or with social and emotional issues. The IST uses the federally required model of Response to Intervention (RTI). Philosophically and practically, it aims to assess a student's problem, provide remediation, and to reassess gains or continued problems the student may be having. The IST is **not** a part of the special education process. Although some students may eventually be referred for special education services, the IST is not seen in the regulations as a "pre-referral" mechanism.

The success of the IST depends upon professional collaboration among team members and knowledge of the students' educational history and current difficulties. In addition, team members directly involved with the student must have knowledge of how to select and correctly implement evidence-based interventions that are likely to address the student's identified needs. Finally, team members must gather formative assessment data that documents the use of the intervention and resulting student progress, and must use this data to inform future interventions.

#### **Summary of the IST process:**

**Referrals:** Any individual who has ongoing concerns about a student's progress in the general education may refer the student to the IST by completing the appropriate IST forms. A parent or guardian of the student should have already been previously contacted with concerns prior to referral to the IST team.

#### **Team Composition:**

Elementary School: Chair (principal/assistant principal), school psychologist, reading specialist (if a reading issue), math coach (if a math issue), presenting classroom teacher

Middle School: Chair (principal/MS assistant principal), school psychologist/counselor, math coach (if a math issue), therapeutic support teacher, presenting classroom teacher

High School: Chair (principal/ HS assistant principal), school psychologist, guidance counselor, behavioral support teacher, presenting classroom teacher

For more specific interventions, include related service providers (SLP, OT, PT, etc.) are included.

**IST Meeting Cycle:**

The following steps summarize the IST process:

1. The IST reviews the referral forms, including attempts that have been made to address the student's difficulties. The team discusses the student's needs and identifies additional accommodations, interventions, and/or supports that will address these areas of difficulty.
2. The IST develops an intervention plan that describes the student's needs; documents these accommodations and identifies the person(s) responsible for their implementation; and, indicates how the student's progress will be monitored and measured.
3. The IST documents team attendance/participation at the initial meeting on the IST intervention plan forms.
4. The teacher and/or other providers implement the student's intervention plan and collect data on the student's progress.
5. After three to four weeks, the IST meets for a follow-up meeting. At this meeting, the IST uses data collected to discuss the student's progress and to re-evaluate the student's needs. As a result of this meeting, several outcomes are possible:
  - a. The IST determines that the student's needs and difficulties have been addressed and no further intervention is needed.
  - b. The IST determines that the student continues to have difficulty; the team uses data on student progress to refine the intervention plan.
6. The IST records the outcome of the follow-up meeting on the IST record form.
7. After an additional three to four weeks, the IST meets for another follow-up meeting. At this point, if the student's difficulties have continued despite the intervention plans, the IST will consider a referral for an evaluation for special education services, a 504 plan, or a referral to other school or community services and supports.