



Deerwood Academy Primary Years Programme

Inclusion Policy

2023-2024 School Year



Purpose:

At Deerwood Academy we believe that all scholars have unique needs to consider when guiding them to meet/exceed their academic and social emotional learning. We create authentic learning experiences by captivating scholars with rigorous activities geared towards their individual learning styles. General, gifted, ELL, and exceptional education work collaboratively to provide supportive strategies and services that help scholars with diverse needs (Exceptional, ELL, and gifted and talented learners) achieve academic success.

Classroom Instruction:

At Deerwood Academy, the majority of our scholars are serviced in the general education classroom for their entire school day. Students who are members of our exceptional learner programs receive support from special education teachers and general education teachers through a co-teaching model. We also have a Moderately Intellectually Disabled (MOID) classroom that provides a challenging learning environment that employs a variety of instructional techniques appropriate to the maturity, interests, and needs of the scholars. These scholars are mainstreamed into general education classrooms where they receive a portion of their daily instruction with their peers.

At Deerwood Academy, we service gifted scholars in first through fifth grades using the cluster model. In the cluster model, identified gifted scholars are placed as a group (recommended 6-8 students) into an otherwise heterogeneous classroom, rather than being dispersed among all of the rooms/courses at that grade level. For our Kindergarten, students are not identified until the Spring. If Kindergarten teachers have any concerns or students show high achievement, the homeroom teacher will collaborate with the lead GATE teacher. In a collaborative model classroom, a maximum of eight identified gifted scholars are placed as a group into an otherwise heterogeneous classroom. Direct instruction is provided by the scholars' regular classroom teacher who collaborates with a designated gifted teacher. There must be substantial, regularly scheduled collaborative planning between the regular classroom teacher and the gifted lead teacher.

In our inclusive classrooms we use several co teaching models.

Co- Teaching Models

1.Station Teaching. In this co-teaching approach, teachers divide content and students. Each teacher then teaches the content to one group and subsequently repeats the instruction for the other group. If appropriate, a third station could give students an opportunity to work independently.



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2. **One Teach, One Assist.** In a second approach to co-teaching, one person would keep primary responsibility for teaching while the other professional circulated through the room providing unobtrusive assistance to students as needed.

3. **Parallel Teaching.** On occasion, student learning would be greatly facilitated if they just had more supervision by the teacher or more opportunity to respond. In parallel teaching, the teachers are both covering the same information, but they divide the class into two groups and teach simultaneously.

4. **Team Teaching:** In team teaching, both teachers are delivering the same instruction at the same time. Some teachers refer to this as having one brain in two bodies. Others call it tag team teaching. Most co-teachers consider this approach the most complex but satisfying way to co-teach, but the approach that is most dependent on teachers' styles.

5. **Alternative Teaching:** In most class groups, occasions arise in which several students need specialized attention. In alternative teaching, one teacher takes responsibility for the large group while the other works with a smaller group.

6. **One Teach, One Observe.** One of the advantages in co-teaching is that more detailed observation of students engaged in the learning process can occur. With this approach, for example, co-teachers can decide in advance what types of specific observational information to gather during instruction and can agree on a system for gathering the data. Afterward, the teachers should analyze the information together.

MTSS Tiered Intervention and Support:

At Deerwood, we use a Multi-tiered System of Supports. (MTSS) is a “tiered system of support that integrates assessment and intervention within a school-wide, multi-level prevention system to maximize student achievement and reduce behavioral problems. MTSS promotes systems alignment to increase efficiency and effectiveness of resources” (Adopted from National Center on Response to Intervention, 2010). Georgia's four-tiered Student Achievement Pyramid of Interventions to provide appropriate and effective Response to Intervention services, which incorporates universal screening, targeted interventions, and a team approach to decision-making and the development and implementation of services. A Student Support Team (SST) meets regularly to monitor the student's progress and provide additional strategies for the teacher to implement in the classroom. The team consists of at least the classroom teacher(s), MTSS support person, and the student's parent/guardian. If the student does not progress, they may decide to begin a battery of comprehensive assessments which may include a psychological evaluation, educational testing, and speech-language assessment to name a few. It is with all of this data that the team in conjunction with the parent/guardian, will determine if the student qualifies for a special needs program and an Individualized Education Program (IEP) to help ensure the student's academic success.



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Tiers I and II Interventions are facilitated in the general education environment by grade level and department teams. Documentation from each tier is utilized to make decisions regarding interventions and movement between tiers.

Tier III Interventions and services are facilitated by teachers and the Student Support Team (SST). The MTSS Chairperson ensures the process is followed and team decisions are made according to the outcome of data, indicating student progress.

Tier IV Interventions and services are facilitated through specialized programs or instructional delivery models such as the Program for Exceptional Children, English Language Learners, or Gifted Instruction.

Section 504:

Congress prohibited discrimination against persons with disabilities in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, in a segment most often referred to simply as 'Section 504.' This was a broadly worded prohibition that covers both children and adults. It applies to programs that receive any federal financial assistance.

Section 504 prohibits discrimination against individuals whose physical or mental impairment substantially limits one or more major life activities, including: caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, working, and learning.

- Under Section 504, schools must afford students with disabilities equal opportunity.
- Many students, who fall within the Section 504 category, are medically involved, and the disability is temporary in nature.
- Section 504 accommodations are delivered and monitored through the Student Support Team.

References

Deerwood Academy Special Education Needs Policy 2013

IB Special Education Documents

Atlanta Public Schools Department of Special Education,
<https://www.atlantapublicschools.us/Page/69497>

Atlanta Public Schools Department of Multilingual Programs +Services
<https://www.atlantapublicschools.us/Page/37955#:~:text=Multilingual%20Services,language%20that%20our%20parents%20understand.>

Georgia Department of Education's Gifted Program,



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<http://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Curriculum-and-Instruction/Pages/Gifted-Education.aspx>

<http://www.ctserc.org/index.php/co-teaching/item/184-six-approaches-to-co-teaching>