

Toomer Elementary School Inclusion Policy



Purpose

Statement of Philosophy

At Toomer, we believe that all students have the right to an equitable and appropriate education. We know that all students have different needs and therefore should be taught in the way that works best for them. At Toomer we support varied learning styles, whether this means a change in environment, instructional method, or content. We serve a variety of special education and gifted and talented students. We believe deeply in the IB philosophy of inclusion. We are all part of a very special community and it takes each one of us to make our community special.

Definitions

Resource

Students receiving resource services spend a majority of their day in a general education class. The remainder of their day is spent with a certified special education teacher in a small group setting.

Co-taught

Students receiving co-taught services spend the entire day with their general education class. This class is served by two full time teachers: one general education and one who specializes in special education.

504

Students receiving a 504 accommodation by a diagnosed condition that limits their ability to be successful in a general education classroom without certain accommodations. These accommodations are reviewed annually by a team. Students receiving 504 accommodations remain in the general education classroom. Their classroom teacher is responsible for ensuring that their 504 accommodations are met.

Regional Units

Students with moderate or severe/profound disabilities receive services in a self-contained classroom at Toomer. Students in the regional units are taught an adapted curriculum. These classes are served by a certified special education teacher and paraprofessional(s). These students may attend specials and other appropriate school events as part of the inclusion model.

Documentation

Special Education Students

Toomer, along with other schools in the Jackson Cluster, offer a variety of services to students who need accommodations. Assessments can be given per the recommendation of parents or a team of stakeholders including the parents. After assessments, which can include psychological evaluations, hearing/vision screenings, speech and language assessments, and/or academic evaluation, students may qualify for a range of services in one or more of the following categories:

- Autism
- Deafblind
- Deaf/Hard of Hearing (D/HH)
- Emotional/Behavioral Disorders
- Intellectual Disabilities (Mild, Moderate, Severe/Profound)
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Significant Developmental Delay
- Specific Learning Disability
- Speech-Language Impairment
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Visually Impairment & Blindness
- Preschool Special Education

Once a student has qualified to receive special education services, a team of stakeholders get together to write an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) for the particular student. These plans create specific, attainable goals for the student as well as outline the particular support that student will receive. When writing IEPs, the goal of stakeholders is to allow students to be included in a general education setting as much as possible. We are very aware of the social ramifications of isolating certain students. Also, the majority of students will still be exposed and held accountable for the Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE).

Section 504 Accommodations

Parents may provide input when creating 504 accommodations. 504 plans often include accommodations like:

- Changing delivery of instruction (for example, providing outlines for notetaking)
- Change the environment of assessment (for example, small group assessment, extended time on assessments)
- Change to instruction (for example, simplifying concepts)

Gifted and Talented

Toomer is currently phasing out the resource model and replacing it with the collaboration model. Our gifted lead teacher meets with each grade level once a week and collaboratively plans lessons that include extensions meeting the gifted standards and services. This allows us to serve each student while keeping their classroom community intact. This is one of the three state-approved gifted and talented delivery models.

Responsibilities & Practices

Teachers

All teachers at Toomer adapt their instruction to individual student needs. Federal and state laws dictate that goals and objectives of a student's IEP are priority over the requirements of IB. Special education and general education teachers continuously collaborate with each other in order to meet the needs of their students. For example, a general education teacher will often reach out to a child's special education case manager in order to better modify their instruction to meet their needs.

Students

Students should work in conjunction with teachers to meet their appropriate IEP goals. Students will have access to the IB curriculum and participate to the best of their ability. They will strive to use the IB Learner Profile Traits to achieve success.

Parents/Guardians

Parents and guardians will work with general education and special education teachers to attend IEP meetings, 504 meetings, and/or parent teacher conferences. In these meetings, parents will support by helping set up IEP goals and/or appropriate learning accommodations for their students. This collaboration ensures that all the needs of a student are being met.

Policy Review

This policy was created by the Toomer Pedagogical Leadership Team. It was created utilizing input from all stakeholders. The IB Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that this policy is reviewed annually.