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**Lake Forest Inclusion Policy 2022-2023**

**Philosophy:**

At Lake Forest, we believe that all learners have unique needs to consider when helping them to meet and exceed their academic and social potential. To provide access to the IB PYP at Lake Forest, we apply approaches and support systems that address the individual needs and varied learning styles, abilities, and speeds of students including those identified with special learning and or emotional needs. By recognizing the diversity of our collective learning community, we support the development of internationally minded people.

**Rights and Responsibilities:**

Students have the right to have their individual learning and socio-emotional needs met. The school has the responsibility to meet the needs of all students by providing a variety of instructional services and supports.

**Differentiation:**

At Lake Forest Elementary, all students receive instruction that enables them to succeed within the range of their approaches to learning, abilities, and interests. Dynamic grouping within classrooms, tiered lessons, intentional use of preassessments, diagnostic and formative assessments help to identify student strengths and areas of focus. Once individual needs are identified, Lake Forest provides various forms of targeted instruction, open-ended learning engagements, and provision of materials (such as level reading materials, enrichment activities, and choice menus) designed to address students’ level of readiness. Differentiation is seen as the process of identifying the needs of each learner and providing the most effective strategies for achieving agreed goals.

**Response to Intervention:**

If students are not making typical rate of progress with standard differentiation, Lake Forest Elementary uses the Georgia Department of Education’s Multi-tiered System of Support for academic and behavior needs. This system provides methods of providing both appropriate and effective Response to Intervention services. Universal screeners, targeted interventions, progress monitoring, and a team approach to decision making and the development/implementation of services are all integral to, and integrated into, the process.

Tier I and II interventions are facilitated in the general education environment by grade level teams. Student data from multiple sources is utilized to make decisions regarding intervention needs and movement between tiers. The required length of time required for Tier 2 Interventions is 15 min. per day 3 times weekly. Tier III interventions and progress monitoring are facilitated by the Student Support Team and implemented by the teacher with increased duration and intensity and/or frequency. The required length of time required for Tier 3 Interventions is 30 minutes per day 4 times weekly. The RTI chair ensures the process is followed and team decisions are made according to the outcome of data indicating the student progress.

MTSS/ RTI also supports social, emotional, and behavioral learning.

**Special Education Support:**

The special education department uses specially designed instruction (SDI) and additional support services to students with special needs who have met eligibility criteria for such services. The process for consideration of evaluation for special education eligibility begins with the Student Support Team (SST). Students are referred for evaluation from a school-based psychologist and other providers (based on individual needs) stemming from an SST recommendation when they demonstrate inadequate response to interventions in the general education setting as well as through direct parent requests.

There is a continuum of service options that are considered to provide the least restrictive environment for individual students who are eligible for special education services. The continuum of services, from least to most restrictive available to students through interrelated services at Lake Forest are:

* Accommodation(s) in the classroom alone
* Consultative services with the student and teacher
* Supportive instruction with paraprofessional in the general education classroom
* Speech language impairment services with a Speech Pathologist while academics are provided in the general education setting.
* Co-taught instruction; special education teacher and general education teacher both providing instruction in the general education classroom.
* Special education setting for academic areas needing support, but also participating in the general education setting for all areas where support is not required.
* Special education setting that includes specially designed curriculum based on the needs of students.
* Related services: i.e., occupational therapy, physical therapy, etc.
* Talented and Gifted Services and High Potential Services
* Students who require a more restrictive environment that is not available at Lake Forest Elementary are able to work through a process, and if necessary, found/determined, that allows for students to receive additional services in a highly specialized setting to meet their needs.
* Autism Classrooms

Lake Forest Elementary School follows state rules and regulations for special education which are detailed by the Georgia Department of Education and in accordance with laws concerning the education of students with disabilities. Parents are included as required members of their IEP committee and they are provided with notice of meetings and a full explanation of the procedural safeguards and parental rights available under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and US Department of Education Regulations.

**504 Support**

Lake Forest Elementary also offers students a 504 plan to help remove barriers to their learning success. 504 plans are provided to students who have a medical diagnosis and need classroom accommodations to best support the student’s individual needs. The goal of 504 plans is for students to be educated in regular classrooms settings, along with the services, accommodations, or educational aids they might need.

Examples of accommodations in 504 plans include:

* Preferential seating
* Extended time on tests and assignments
* Reduced homework or classwork
* Verbal, visual, or technology aids
* Modified textbooks or audio-video materials
* Behavior manage support
* Adjusted class schedules or grading
* Verbal testing
* Excused lateness, absence or missed classwork
* Preapproved nurses’ office visits and accompaniment to visits
* Adaptive Programs
* IReady

**Ongoing Review of the Assessment Policy**

This document will be formally reviewed annually or more often as needed by Lake-Forest Staff and revised as needed to provide best practices for the needs of the students.

9/7/22