

Wichita Collegiate School Statement of Learning Accommodations

Learning accommodations are used at all educational levels at Wichita Collegiate School (WCS). Approximately twenty to twenty-five percent of the population have been diagnosed with learning differences. A significant percentage of those who are formally diagnosed are gifted or above average in intelligence. It is no surprise, then, that the student body at WCS includes students with learning differences. As our knowledge about learning differences increases, our responsibility to these students and their parent's increases. There are professional, moral, ethical and legal guidelines that help us determine our responsibility as well. We are committed to helping these students be successful.

Parents evaluating whether Collegiate is a good fit for their learning different child need to consider the following general facts.

There are features of our school that may make the match a good one.

- Highly qualified and experienced teachers
- Small student-teacher ratio
- Engaging and interactive classroom presentations
- Counselor in each division
- Learning lab personnel

However, there are features of our school that may make the match problematic.

- The curriculum is accelerated and moves quickly
- A large quantity of written work
- Heavy reading requirements
- Homework every night
- The curriculum is prescribed with limited academic choices
- Graduation requirements include four years of Math and English; three years of Foreign Language, Science, and History; and senior Humanities including AP courses.

Students are expected to accomplish the Collegiate curriculum. On occasion, in Lower and Middle School, academic interventions are available to bring the student in line with our program. Ultimately most families, including those whose children have learning differences, choose Collegiate because of the academic curriculum.

One way we evaluate the continuance of a student is by answering the following two questions.

1. Can the student learn in the classroom?
2. Can other students learn while he/she is in the classroom?

Goals for Learning Accommodations

WCS believes that many students with learning differences are capable of flourishing in our program. Historically, our goal has been to allow each student capable of handling the rigors of the Collegiate curriculum to have the tools necessary to do so successfully. Accommodations are designed to support individual performance to the best of the student's ability.

The Learning Lab supports the Mission of Wichita Collegiate School. "The mission of Wichita Collegiate School is to educate today's students to be tomorrow's leaders through a diverse and caring community with passionate teachers and an inspiring curriculum."

What accommodations does WCS offer learning different students?

The following accommodations are typically allowed, depending on individual diagnosis and the resultant educational recommendations:

- Grade on content, not spelling, punctuation, or grammar on in-class work
- Calculator use
- Use of laptop
- Oral expansion of written language
- Extended time
- Quiet room
- Class notes provided
- Audiobooks- Learning Ally
- Preferential seating
- Mastery approach to learning
- After school tutorials
- Assistive technology- voice to text, text to speech for quizzes and test

What accommodations does WCS NOT offer or allow learning different students?

- Accommodations that contradict our curriculum Accommodations that suggest a student not accomplish the goals of a particular assignment
- One-on-one paraprofessional support
- Students are expected to meet foreign language requirements
- We expect students to participate in all testing formats. We do not limit the choices on multiple choice tests.

How does a student qualify for accommodations?

Accommodations come from the diagnostic psychological/educational (psycho-ed) testing given by a psychologist or other qualified diagnostician. We decide which suggestions from the list of recommendations fit and are consistent with our program. We are not always able to provide all the accommodations that may be recommended.

What equipment and facilities are made available for learning different students?

There are learning lab rooms in Lower School, Middle School, and Upper School divisions. In grades 1-5, students use iPads and students in grades 6-12 have one-to-one laptops. Students are allowed to use audio books, calculators, iPads, laptops and other assistive technology as defined by their learning plans.

How does WCS provide feedback to parents regarding the performance of their learning different students?

Commentaries are sent home at the regular commentary intervals. If the student has Learning Lab (LL), then the LL specialist will also be in communication with parents regarding individual student progress as requested/needed.

What is the role of the parent in the learning different program?

Parents are the primary advocate for their student initially. Our goal is for learning different student to become their own advocate to ensure academic success. We also hope to help them practice each accommodation so they can decide what works/helps and what doesn't in any given subject. If a parent (or student) has questions about accommodations, they are encouraged to contact the teacher or division counselor. A parent support group meets monthly to support each other and to share information.

Does every student receive an individual learning plan?

Those individuals with a psycho-educational evaluation receive an individual learning plan developed by the division counselor with input from the psychoeducational evaluation, classroom teachers, parents, and student. The contents of these plans are shared with the student's teachers.

What three factors help predict the academic success of learning different students at WCS?

Learning different students who are successful in our academic program have the powerful combination of **ability, motivation, and support**. We use that three-pronged approach to student success.

Are there extra fees associated with a learning different student and WCS accommodations?

There are no fees related to accommodations in the individual classroom. The Learning Lab is fee-based with the fee schedule being available in each division.

Overall Philosophy of the Learning Lab

The mission of the Wichita Collegiate Learning Lab is to provide specialized instructional support for students whose academic success is at risk or limited by specific learning differences or by deficiencies in basic skills.

Students typically have a diagnosis of a learning difference from a licensed psychologist; the diagnosis includes accommodations and suggestions for the school. Occasionally a student will be referred for help in a Learning Lab who has not been officially diagnosed with a learning difference. A student in this category may be weak in a particular skill that is affecting the educational success or may be suffering from a temporary academic struggle due to self-esteem, family, health or other personal issues.

Lower School can provide space for outside tutors to work with students to develop specific skills. Programs include: Speech, Occupational Therapy, Alphabetic Phonics, Simple Math. Space is limited.

The Middle School and Upper School Learning Lab program may also include Multisensory Reading and Spelling (MRS), specific skill building, homework preparation, study skills and strategies, organizational help, and exam preparation.

What are the qualifications and requirements for Learning Lab Specialist?

The Learning Lab specialists are trained classroom teachers and/or have specialized training in areas of expertise. They may also have a particular curricular specialty such as Alphabetic Phonics, Multisensory Reading and Spelling, and Simple Math or higher level Mathematics. Approval of the division head after consulting with the counselor at the division level is required to be a tutor at Collegiate. A list of tutors is available and WCS will have on file a completed professional resume, background check, and Contract Tutor Agreement. The LL Specialist will be familiar with the WCS Statement of Learning Accommodations.

Who recommends students to the learning lab system?

The division head is ultimately responsible for placing a student in the Learning Lab. Teachers, counselors, and parents are an important factor in planning this support.

Glossary of words:

Learning Lab (LL) an additional fee service of support for students in Middle School and Upper School needing additional assistance in study skills, organization, test preparation, and homework completion.

Tutor- Provides students with additional academic support that is designed to their learning style and pace. At an additional cost the following tutoring services are also available:

- Alphabetic Phonics
- Multisensory Reading
- Spelling or
- Simple Math

These services can be offered in Early Childhood, Lower School, Middle School or Upper School.

Learning Ally- an organization that provides audio books (previously known as Reading for the Blind and Dyslexic RFBD). Collegiate provides membership through a site license purchased by WCS for qualifying students with a learning difference.

Tutorials- an opportunity for students to receive additional skills, ask questions or learn strategies to help them understand a concept or subject from their teacher. Tutorials are held for one hour after school. Upper School also offers before school tutorials from 8:10am-8:50 am

Commentaries- teacher comments on students work for a period of time. These are done quarterly and also individual comments are made throughout the year on Powerschool.

PowerSchool- program used to manage grades, attendance, schedules, etc. for the entire school.

Gifted- students who demonstrate evidence of high achievement capability in such areas as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or in specific academic fields.

Mastery Approach to Learning- method of instruction where the focus is on the role of feedback in learning. Mastery Learning is an instructional method that establishes a level of performance all students must master before moving on to the next unit.

Paraprofessional support- an individual who provides additional support to the teacher for a specific student in the classroom setting who is not licensed to practice as a qualified professional.

Outside tutors- Individuals who are not employed by WCS but are contracted by the parents to provide supplemental learning services (i.e., Alphabetic Phonics, Multisensory Reading and Spelling, Semple Math, ACT prep, etc.)

