



# **Instructional Support Services Program Manual**

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## **Mission and Vision**

The Instructional Support Services Department at Georgia Cyber Academy believes that all students can learn and deserve to achieve academic success. We support students served in our department by:

- providing targeted, small-group Tier 2 instruction and domain-specific, individualized Tier 3 instruction
- improving student engagement through targeted behavioral interventions
- providing appropriate accommodations through 504 plans and Hospital Homebound Services, and
- helping eliminate linguistic barriers through our comprehensive ESOL program.

We will continually analyze student progress to build and implement comprehensive services and programs to meet students where they are and support their learning path toward high school graduation.

# Multi-Tiered System of Supports

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## Program Summary

This section provides information about the function and purpose of the Response to Intervention (RTI) and Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) program.

### Georgia Department of Education

According to the GADOE, Georgia's Tiered System of Supports for Students (Georgia's MTSS) is a framework that integrates assessment and intervention within a school-wide, multi-level prevention system to maximize student achievement and reduce behavioral problems. In Georgia, a three-tiered prevention system in the general education classroom guides teachers and leaders to implement a strong and rigorous standards-based learning environment.

All students participate in general education learning. Students requiring interventions to meet individual learning expectations will receive support through a systematic and purposeful process called Response to Intervention or RTI. The number of students requiring interventions will decrease as the intensity of the intervention increases.

### Goals of an MTSS System

- For the school and staff to provide effective teaching that fits the needs of each student
- For the school and staff to make sure the classroom environment is the best possible for every student
- To help all students meet grade-level standards
- To use student data to identify students who may be struggling
- To add to general education instruction, not replace it with something different
- To provide interventions as a natural, ongoing part of education that doesn't wait until the student is struggling

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires evidence-based interventions and suggests that schools and districts implement a tiered support system. ESSA also allows state flexibility in using grant funds to implement an MTSS framework for literacy in kindergarten through grade 12 [Sec 2224(e)(4)].

House Bill 740 requires local school systems to use a multi-tiered system of supports and reviews before expelling or assigning a preschool through third-grade student to out-of-school suspension for more than five consecutive or cumulative days during a school year.

## Overview

### *Pyramid of Supports*

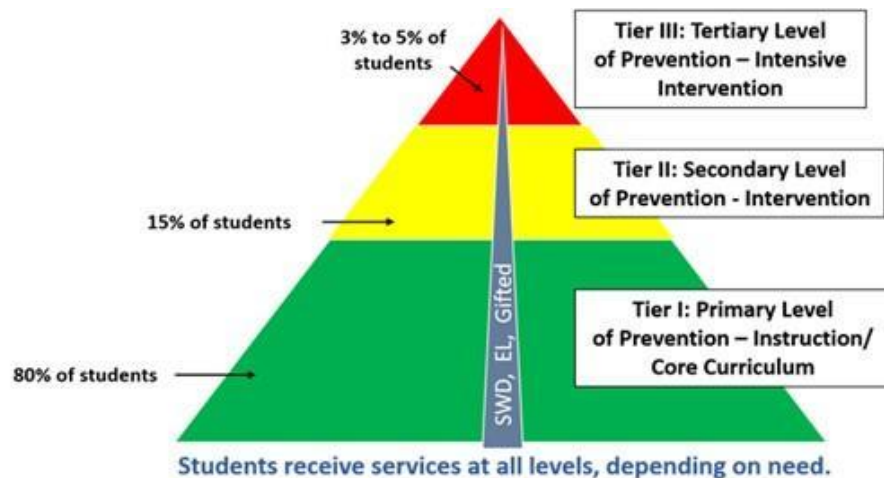
Source: Georgia Department of Education

Response to Intervention (RTI) is embedded throughout Georgia's Tiered System of Supports for Students (MTSS) framework. RTI is embedded within the Multi-Level Prevention System to provide support matched to student needs, maximizing student achievement and improving behavioral outcomes.

Georgia's MTSS includes schoolwide implementation focusing on the “what and how of instruction” and providing services and support to students that meet their unique, whole-child needs.

Until now, Georgia was the only state to have a four-tiered pyramid. Now, Georgia operates within a three-tiered, multi-level prevention system. Students will receive services at all levels, depending on their needs. When all components are implemented, research shows results include strengthened Tier I instruction, with 80% of students responding to the core curriculum.

Georgia's Tiered System of Supports for Students represents a cross-divisional effort among Teaching and Learning, School and District Effectiveness, Federal Programs, Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, and Special Education.



A multi-level prevention system (MTSS) is essential to Georgia's MTSS. The system includes three intensity or prevention levels designed to improve high-quality core instruction, evidence-based interventions, and support when used effectively within the framework.

The triangle graphic depicts the progression of support across the multi-level prevention system. The triangle represents three levels of prevention and the

percentage of students expected to benefit from the levels of prevention in an effective system.

### Tier I: Primary Level or Instruction/Core Curriculum

<b>FOCUS</b>	Students identified as in need of enrichment/acceleration or who are at risk for poor learning and/or behavioral outcomes.
<b>INSTRUCTION</b>	Targeted, supplemental instruction delivered to small groups (evidence-based interventions)
<b>SETTING</b>	General education classroom or other education settings within the school
<b>ASSESSMENTS</b>	Progress monitoring, diagnostic

### Tier II: Secondary Level or Intervention

<b>FOCUS</b>	<b>ALL Students</b>
<b>INSTRUCTION</b>	District curriculum and instructional practices that are research based; aligned with state or district standards; and incorporate differentiated instruction.
<b>SETTING</b>	General education classroom
<b>ASSESSMENTS</b>	Screening, continuous progress monitoring, and outcome measures or summative assessments

### Tier III: Tertiary Level or Intensive Intervention

<b>FOCUS</b>	Students who have not responded to primary or secondary level prevention
<b>INSTRUCTION</b>	Intensive, supplemental instruction delivered to small groups or individually
<b>SETTING</b>	General education classroom or other appropriate setting within the school
<b>ASSESSMENTS</b>	Progress monitoring, diagnostic



## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **MTSS Supervisor**

The MTSS Supervisor is a highly qualified, state-certified educator responsible for maintaining MTSS processes and procedures online. The MTSS Supervisor provides support and guidance to district staff and helps manage the learning process by focusing on students' individual needs. Supervisors monitor student progress through various platforms and work closely with School Level MTSS Intervention Coordinators, Intervention Specialists, teachers, students, and parents/Learning Coaches to advance each student's learning toward established goals. While the MTSS Instructional Supervisor monitors Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention, the MTSS SST Supervisor monitors the Student Support Team (SST) and initial eligibility processes.

### **MTSS Intervention Coordinator**

The MTSS Intervention Coordinator is a highly qualified, state-certified educator responsible for implementing MTSS processes and procedures online. Coordinators provide support and guidance to school-based staff and help manage the learning process by focusing on students' individual needs. Coordinators monitor student progress through various platforms and work closely with Intervention Specialists, teachers, students, and parents/Learning Coaches to advance each student's learning toward established goals.

### **MTSS Academic Intervention Specialist**

The MTSS Intervention Specialist is a highly qualified, state-certified educator responsible for delivering specific course content online. Specialists provide instruction and support, manage the learning process, and focus on students' needs. Specialists monitor student progress through various platforms and work closely with teachers, students, and parents/Learning Coaches to advance students' learning toward established goals.

### **MTSS Behavior Intervention Specialist**

The MTSS Behavior Intervention Specialist is a highly qualified, state-certified educator responsible for delivering specific behavioral interventions online. Specialists provide support and guidance, manage the learning process, and focus on students' behavioral needs. Specialists monitor student progress through various platforms and work closely with teachers, students, and parents/Learning Coaches to advance each student's behavior toward established goals.

## **Glossary of Commonly Used Terms**

*Terms From Georgia Department of Education Website*

**Acceleration:** interventions implemented to increase the speed at which students acquire skills.

**Assessment:** a broad term used to describe collecting information about student performance in a specific area. Assessments or tests can be formal or informal.

**At Risk:** students with poor learning and behavioral outcomes, students in jeopardy of being retained, or students who may not be on track to graduate on time.

**Benchmark:** measures used to determine student progress and guide instruction

**Best Practices:** evidence-based teaching strategies that generate positive student responses.

**Collaboration:** a team working cooperatively to achieve a goal or complete a task. MTSS requires a team approach to impact student outcomes positively.

**Components:** a comprehensive set of services, resources, and cohesive strategies essential to implementing the MTSS framework as intended and meeting the needs of all learners.

**Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teaching:** integrating instructional resources and tools that include the student's native language, rhetoric, and experiences to eliminate learning barriers.

**Data-Based Decision Making:** an essential component of Georgia's Tiered System of Supports for Students: a process for setting/evaluating goals; the ongoing process of analyzing and assessing student data to inform educational decisions, including but not limited to approaches to instruction, intervention, allocation of resources, development of policy, movement within a multi-level system, and disability identification.

**Differentiated Instruction:** a broad term referring to recognizing and responding to students' varying interests, readiness levels, and learning needs.

**Effective Teaming:** a critical element of Georgia’s Tiered System of Supports for Students; a team of people who work collaboratively to accomplish goals by reviewing data and determining next steps.

**Evidence-Based Practices:** an essential component of Georgia’s Tiered System of Supports for Students; educational practices or strategies that have factual evidence for results.

**Evidence-Based Intervention:** an intervention for which data from scientific, rigorous research studies have demonstrated or validated the results.

**Family and Community Engagement:** a critical element of Georgia’s Tiered System of the problem-solving process and in decisions regarding intervention adjustments to improve academic and behavioral outcomes.

**Fidelity (Fidelity of Implementation):** the accurate and consistent delivery of instruction or assessment in the way it was designed or prescribed according to research findings and developers’ specifications.

**Framework:** intended plan or model for articulating teaching/learning activities, assessment/tests, processes, and desired results that can maximize student achievement. This may include long-term understanding/knowledge, essential questions, tasks/activities, culminating tasks, rubrics, and resources.

**High Leverage Practices (HLP):** teaching strategies that teachers use to support student learning.

**Infrastructure:** an essential component of Georgia’s Tiered System of Supports for Students; a school's knowledge, resources, and organizational structures that support the effective use of an MTSS framework.

**Integration:** to unite and become part of a larger group, task, or project.

**Interventions:** instruction based on student needs that supplements the general education curriculum and uses evidence-based instructional strategies and techniques.

**Leadership:** a critical element of Georgia’s Tiered System of Supports for Students; the ability of an individual or organization to lead or guide individuals, teams, or

processes. Multi-level Instruction – school-wide instruction delivered to all students in various forms and methods designed to meet each student’s needs.

**Professional Learning:** a critical element of Georgia’s Tiered System of Supports for Students; district and school leadership provide a supportive environment for teachers’ learning, which helps to ensure highly qualified staff, quality instruction, and implementation of evidence-based practices.

**Progress Monitoring:** an essential component of Georgia’s Tiered System of Supports for Students; scientifically based practice used to assess students’ academic and behavioral performance and evaluate the effectiveness of instruction; can be implemented with individual students or an entire class.

**Multi-Tiered Prevention System:** an essential component of Georgia’s Tiered System of Supports for Students; a school-wide framework with support systems and resources designed to provide support matched to student needs to maximize student achievement and reduce poor behavioral outcomes.

**Screening:** an essential component of Georgia’s Tiered System of Supports for Students. It is conducted to identify students needing additional instruction or help so that early intervention can occur. Screening assessments or tests are typically brief and are usually administered to all students at a grade level.

# **Academic Tiers of Support**

## **Tier 1–Standards Based Learning**

Primary Level–Instruction/Core Curriculum–Standards–based instruction, universal screening, and progress monitoring are the critical foundation elements of the Response to Intervention model. Every public school in Georgia must teach the standards to all students based on their grade level and content area. Universal screening helps teachers identify students who will need more individualized assistance. Progress monitoring allows teachers to assess instruction effectiveness and differentiate their assistance based on the student's instructional and behavioral needs. When using a variety of Tier 1 strategies, and the student is not showing significant improvement, this should be the trigger that activates the school's RTI plan to bring more focused attention and more intensive instructional assistance that comprises Tier 2.

Any student enrolled at Georgia Cyber Academy receives Tier 1 interventions regularly. Tier 1 interventions include live class sessions, access to content through the online learning platform, small group instruction, access to class recordings, and access to notes and PowerPoints. Student achievement is measured and monitored through class assignments, Interim Assessments, benchmark assessments (MAP), and Milestones assessments.

## **Tier 2–Needs Based Learning**

Secondary Level–Intervention–Tier 2 is characterized by more concentrated small–group or individual interventions targeting specific needs and essential skills. All Tier 2 Interventions must be evidence–based and aligned with the student's needs and the school's resources. Interventions may involve an increase in intensity, frequency, and duration of the strategies utilized in Tier 1, or they may be entirely different based on information shared among staff members. Collaboration by staff in delivering rigorous instruction and appropriate Tier 2 interventions is vital to ensure a transfer of learning from Tier 2 to Tier 1 activities. Teachers use evidence–based interventions, goal setting, and ongoing progress monitoring to measure student response to interventions and guide decision–making. Progress monitoring is more frequent and vital to judge interventions' effectiveness based on the student's response to them. Suppose such interventions, implemented with fidelity and for an established duration, are ineffective. In that case, the staff must call upon the Student Support Team's (SST) assistance and may refer the student for Tier 3 support.

Students who are unsuccessful at Tier 1 may require additional support and progress monitoring at Tier 2. Students are identified for Tier 2 through consideration

of their benchmark and Milestones scores, educational history, and teacher input. Once students are elevated to Tier 2, they meet with their Academic Intervention Specialist for additional weekly remediation sessions. The teacher should develop rigorous yet realistic, measurable goals for the student. The teacher will provide targeted instruction and collect weekly data points to monitor student growth and progress.

### **Tier 3–Student Support Team**

Tertiary Level–Intensive Intervention– If a student is not making adequate progress or showing appropriate growth at Tier 2, the MTSS team may determine that they need additional support at the Tier 3 level. To elevate a student to Tier 3, the MTSS team (School Level Coordinator, Intervention Specialists, content teachers, and parents, when possible) will hold an SST meeting to review student data. If the student’s progress monitoring data from Tier 2 shows little or no growth, the team may decide to elevate the student to Tier 3. The SST team should develop realistic yet rigorous, measurable goals for the student.

Once elevated, the student will receive a higher frequency and intensity of interventions and support structured to the student’s individual needs. The intervention specialist will meet with the student in a small group each week to provide individualized remediation in the necessary areas while collecting data on the student’s progress. Progress monitoring data is collected weekly to analyze the student’s response to interventions. SST meetings are held every six weeks to review the data and determine if growth has occurred. Students may stay at the Tier 3 level, continue receiving Tier 3 support, or move to Tier 2 if data indicates substantial growth. When students have received interventions for an adequate period, and little to no growth has been made, they may be referred for further evaluation and Special Education consideration.

# **Behavior Tiers of Support**

## **Tier 1: Primary Level-Classroom Management**

Classroom management, school-wide behavior expectations, and progress monitoring are the critical foundation elements of the Response to Intervention model for Behavior. Georgia Cyber Academy has established developmentally appropriate behavior expectations for each grade band. In the classroom, these expectations are modeled by teachers and practiced by all students. Georgia Cyber Academy uses a Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Framework to support all students at Tier 1. Progress monitoring allows teachers to assess the effectiveness of classroom management and to differentiate their assistance based on the behavioral needs of the students. When a variety of Tier 1 strategies are utilized, and the student is not showing significant improvement, this should be the trigger that activates the school's RTI plan to bring more focused attention and more intensive behavior assistance that comprises Tier 2.

## **Tier 2: Secondary Level-Intervention**

Tier 2 is characterized by the addition of concentrated small-group or individual interventions provided by a Behavior Intervention Specialist that target specific behavioral needs. All Tier 2 Interventions must be evidence-based and aligned with the student's needs and the school's resources. Interventions may involve an increase in intensity, frequency, and duration of the strategies utilized in Tier 1, or they may be entirely different based on information shared among staff members. Behavior Intervention Specialists use evidence-based interventions, goal setting, and ongoing progress monitoring to measure student response to interventions and to guide the decision-making process. Progress monitoring is more frequent and vital to judge interventions' effectiveness based on the student's response to them. Suppose such interventions, implemented with fidelity and for an established duration, are ineffective. In that case, the staff must call upon the Student Support Team's (SST) assistance and may refer the student for Tier 3 support.

Students who are unsuccessful at Tier 1 may require additional support and progress monitoring at Tier 2. Students are identified for Tier 2 by considering the following: attendance, engagement/participation, assignment completion, impact of diagnoses, and other behaviors that negatively impact them in the classroom setting. Once a student is elevated to Tier 2, they will begin participating in the GCA Check-in/Check-out program. The Behavior Intervention Specialist should develop realistic and measurable goals for the student. The Behavior Intervention Specialist

will provide a weekly Check-in session and collect weekly data to monitor student growth and progress.

### **Tier 3: Tertiary Level-Intensive Intervention**

If a student is not making adequate progress or showing appropriate growth at Tier 2, the MTSS team may determine that they need additional support at the Tier 3 level. To elevate a student to Tier 3, the MTSS team (School Level Coordinator, Intervention Specialists, content teachers, and parents, when possible) will hold an SST meeting to review student data. If the student's progress monitoring data from Tier 2 shows little or no growth, the team may decide to elevate the student to Tier 3. The SST team should develop realistic yet rigorous, measurable goals for the student.

Once elevated, the student will receive a higher frequency and intensity of interventions and support structured to the student's individual needs. The Behavior Intervention Specialist will meet with the student in a small group or individually each week to continue providing weekly Check-in/Check-out sessions. Tier 3 support will add an extra layer of support, including classroom observations and an engagement contract while continuing to collect data on the student's progress. Progress monitoring data is collected weekly to analyze the student's response to interventions. SST meetings are held every six weeks to review the data and determine if growth has occurred. Students may stay at the Tier 3 level, continue receiving Tier 3 support, or move to Tier 2 if data indicates substantial growth. When students have received interventions for an adequate period, and little to no growth has been made, they may be referred for further evaluation and Special Education consideration.

### **Summary**

In summary, the SST is mandated by federal court order, and our MTSS model is a systemic process that bridges behavioral and academic gaps. Ultimately, the success of any SST relies on the foundation of Tiers 1 and 2. Success is attainable when schools analyze their data to identify school-wide, classroom, and individual student needs and by their use of evidence-based strategies and interventions led by ongoing professional learning, coaching, and measurement of student response to these supports. The Georgia Multi-Level Prevention System is a robust school improvement framework guided by data-driven decision-making and time-proven practices to proactively address the needs of all Georgia students in the 21st Century.



**Special Education Referral**

After providing interventions and collecting data for 6–8 weeks, the SST team will reconvene and review student data. If a student has not made adequate progress after an appropriate period and has been provided with appropriate instruction, the team may request an educational evaluation. At that time, the team may continue supporting the student at Tier 3 or refer the student for a psychoeducational evaluation and Special Education consideration.

## **Solving Learner Concerns—Processes and Procedures**

### **Identification**

*Tier 1*—General population of students—Universal screeners and benchmark assessments are administered periodically throughout the year to determine students who need more targeted instruction.

*Tier 2*— The MTSS team uses a variety of sources to identify students for Tier 2 support. The team considers iReady Diagnostics, MAP scores, Milestones scores, retention history, and teacher recommendation. These students are required to attend all live class connect sessions.

*Tier 3*— Students with four or more data points who do not progress adequately at Tier 2 are considered for Tier 3 support. The Student Support team considers academic history, GA Milestones, MAP scores, Interim Assessments, current grades, pretest scores, enrollment history, and Tier 2 data when elevating a student to Tier 3. If data shows the need for elevation, the student is referred to Tier 3.

### **Progress Monitoring**

*Tier 1*— Students are monitored three times per year through NWEA MAP, iReady Diagnostics, and Interim Assessments.

*Tier 2*— Students in grades K-5 meet with AIM Intervention Specialists four times per week and receive interventions in reading and math. Middle school students meet with AIM teachers twice weekly per content. Students in grades K-8 are monitored weekly in i-Ready, while high school students are monitored through various tools, including IXL and our AMP mentoring program. If the Tier 2 Intervention Specialist determines that the student is not making adequate progress, he or she should discuss Tier 3 elevation with his or her direct supervisor.

*Tier 3*— Students continue to attend their Tier 2 intervention sessions and work with a Tier 3 Intervention specialist once weekly per content. The Tier 3 Intervention Specialist identifies and utilizes more intensive interventions and student-specific progress monitoring.

### **Differentiated Instruction**

*Tier 1*—All students participate in general education classes. According to data, if a student is meeting benchmarks and progressing in the curriculum, the student can have a flexible schedule. Tiered instruction may be applied if students do not meet these markers throughout the year.

*Tier 2 & 3*—Students must attend live class sessions based on performance indicators. They are taught a concept in class, and teachers analyze data from

assignments. Students who struggle with a concept are invited to additional classes and taught the concept again. Students who are struggling are invited to additional sessions for further specialized support.

### **Universal Screeners**

The Universal Screeners aim to screen and identify students needing additional academic and/or behavioral support before failing. Students identified by a Universal Screener or other data indicating a potential difficulty with content instruction in Tier 1 are considered to need additional support.

- **Georgia Milestones**—The Georgia Milestones Assessment System (Georgia Milestones) is a comprehensive summative assessment program for grades 3 through high school. It measures how well students have learned the knowledge and skills outlined in the state-adopted English Language Arts, mathematics, science, and social studies content standards.
- **NWEA MAP**—MAP Growth reveals how much growth has occurred between testing events and shows projected proficiency when combined with our norms. Educators can track growth throughout the school year and over multiple years.
- **iReady Diagnostic**—The iReady Diagnostic provides each student with an overall grade level equivalency, nationally normed percentile ranking, and Lexile/Quantile measures.

### **Data Analysis**

The data team will meet frequently to confirm the fidelity of interventions through data review and analysis. If little or no progress is documented, additional interventions may be required. The data team will follow established data analysis protocols to determine if additional interventions should be implemented, assess student progress, and determine if continued support through Tier 2 is required, additional Tier 2 interventions are required, or if Tier 3 support, in addition to Tier 1 and Tier 2, is required.

At Tier 3, data from consistent progress monitoring guide the intensity, duration, and frequency of instruction, which varies based on individual learning goals.

### **Meetings**

For students receiving Tier 2 support, teachers and School Level Coordinators will meet regularly to review student progress. Students who are not making adequate progress are referred to the Student Support Team. The Student Support

Team will schedule a meeting to review data and implement Tier 3 interventions and supports. Initial and subsequent SST meetings are held approximately every six weeks to review progress and determine effectiveness and response to the intervention.

## Direct Parent Referrals (DPR)

The Office of Special Education is responsible for identifying, evaluating, and providing specialized instruction to eligible students in the least restrictive environment. Child Find activities are conducted on behalf of all children with disabilities. We are required to ensure that each identified child has access to a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). Please see the Georgia Department of Education website for Georgia State Board Rules regarding [Child Find Procedures](#) and [FAPE](#).

If a student is experiencing academic, behavioral, or social difficulty, he or she is referred to the Student Support Team (SST). This team may include teachers, counselors, parents, administrators, special educators, speech pathologists, and psychologists. School staff members or parents may make a referral to the SST. The SST committee discusses the student's difficulties and brainstorms to develop possible strategies or interventions that may help the child perform in the regular classroom. The SST monitors the child's progress and reviews the case periodically to change strategies if necessary. Written parental consent is obtained before any assessment to determine if a child is eligible for special education. The strategies and progress monitoring process will continue during the special education evaluation process, per Georgia State Board Rules. Parents are always welcome and encouraged to attend SST meetings regarding their children. Parents maintain their due process right to request an evaluation. However, referral and eligibility for special education should not be considered without documentation of prior instructional interventions. A Student Support Team bypass procedure does exist (see Georgia Rule 160-4-2-.32) for rare cases when indicated by the severity of the disability or extreme circumstances.

Suppose a parent requests their student to be evaluated due to a suspected disability. In that case, the SST must consider that there may be one or more factors internal to the student (e.g., needs, fears, attitudes, serious weaknesses, processing problems) that are the primary reasons for the lack of adequate success. If the team finds solutions for these supposed factors, the student proceeds back down the pyramid to ongoing progress. The SST closes the case and terminates it from their active caseload. If, after educational/behavioral evaluation, analysis, and intervention, their best efforts at remediation repeatedly fail, then they must consider that the student may have a disability. At that point, a referral for a comprehensive evaluation of Special Education is appropriate. It is important to note that this is not to say that the SST team has, by referring, diagnosed a disability. However, it is also not their prerogative to decline to refer students because they doubt the student would qualify for a disability category.

Additional information regarding the special education evaluation process can be found on the [Georgia Department of Education website](#).

### **DPR Procedures**

If a parent directly requests an evaluation from a staff member, the staff member should immediately complete the [Staff Referral for Student Support Survey](#). After submitting the survey, the MTSS SST Supervisor will send the DPR Parent Informational Letter to the guardian and notify them that their request has been received by the Student Support Team (SST). The SST will schedule a meeting to honor the guardian's request.

The MTSS SST Supervisor will log receipt of the referral and initial contact in the contact log of Infinite Campus and on the DPR tracker. The MTSS SST Supervisor will forward the referral to the assigned SST Coordinator. The MTSS Intervention Coordinator {SST} will contact the guardian within 10 days of receiving the referral and schedule a DPR SST Meeting (giving the guardian a 10 day notice of meeting). The MTSS Intervention Coordinator {SST} will log the date that the guardian was notified in the contact log of Infinite Campus.

#### *Before the SST Meeting*

1. The MTSS Intervention Coordinator {SST} will send the following documents to the legal guardian:
  - SST Notice of Meeting
  - 3300 Hearing and Vision Form (if applicable)
  - Student Background and Developmental History Form
2. The MTSS Intervention Coordinator {SST} will request that the guardian return all documentation before the SST meeting, if possible.
3. The MTSS Intervention Coordinator {SST} will send a Google Calendar Invitation to the following SST members, notifying them of the SST Meeting:
  - Speech/Language Pathologist (if applicable)
  - MTSS SST Supervisor
  - Student's General Education Teachers
  - Student's AIM Teachers (if applicable)
  - Student's Tier 3 Intervention Specialist (if applicable)
  - Student's Behavior Intervention Specialist (if applicable)
  - Student's FEL
  - Anyone else who works with the student (504 Coordinator, ESOL, Social Worker, Counselor)

4. The MTSS Intervention Coordinator {SST} will review all returned documentation and complete an SST meeting form for the student before the SST Meeting.
5. The MTSS Intervention Coordinator {SST} will send an email reminder to the guardian before the SST meeting (24 hours in advance).

#### *During the SST Meeting*

1. If the parent attends, the MTSS Intervention Coordinator {SST} will present all data in the SST Form, including parental concerns. The SST will identify areas of concern and develop a plan of action, including interventions and areas for data collection. The MTSS/SE Eligibility Coordinator will review the Special Education evaluation process and procedures. She will then present the following documents and allow the parent to decide how to proceed:
  - Consent to Evaluate--Parent should sign "yes" or "no" in the meeting, indicating their decision
2. The MTSS Intervention Coordinator {SST} will detail how the parent wishes to proceed.
3. If the parent doesn't attend, the Student Support Team will review all present information and decide how to support the student. The team may decide to add AIM or Tier 3 support. If the data reviewed does not warrant tiered intervention, the team will send the minutes to the parent and continue to follow up with the request by phone every ten days until there is a resolution.

#### *After the SST Meeting*

##### Parent Attends and Agrees to Data Collection before Evaluation

1. Schedule a follow-up SST Meeting six weeks from the initial meeting date
2. Email the guardian the following documents:
  - Copy of SST Meeting Minutes (password protected with student's six-digit birthday)
  - SST Notice of Meeting for next SST meeting (to be held within six weeks)
  - 3300 and/or Medical Document (if needed)
3. Send a Google Calendar invitation to SST for the next meeting
4. Complete the Student Services Change Survey
5. Notify Grade Band MTSS SST Supervisor, MTSS Intervention Coordinator, and Intervention Specialists of SST Plan
6. Request Teacher Feedback and Work Samples before the next SST Meeting

7. Review data weekly to ensure the student is working at the appropriate level

#### Parent Attends and Signs Consent to Evaluate

1. Follow all steps as outlined above.
2. Complete the Student Services Change Survey
3. Notify the MTSS SST Supervisor and Special Education Eligibility Team of the signed consent immediately so the referral can be entered

#### Parent Does Not Attend the SST Meeting

1. Email the guardian the following documents:
  - Copy of SST Meeting Minutes (password protected with student's six-digit birthday)
  - SST Notice of Meeting for the next SST meeting (if applicable)
  - 3300 and/or Medical Document (if needed)
2. Follow up with the parent by phone and email every ten days until the parent agrees to attend an SST meeting or withdraws their request to evaluate. If the parent does not respond after five attempts, notify the MTSS SST Supervisor.



## **Interventions**

### **Primary Grade Band (K-2) and Elementary Grade Band (3-5)**

#### *Tier 2 Interventions*

Content-specific, researched-based intervention strategies and progress monitoring tools, approved by the school district, are used with the student. The student meets for RTI/MTSS in a small group with the Intervention Specialist four times weekly for targeted instruction and progress monitoring. The teaching team and MTSS team review progress. Other school-based assessment data is reviewed along with this data to determine if the student should be referred to the Student Support Team for a meeting with the parent and recommendations for further interventions and progress monitoring.

#### *Tier 3 Interventions*

Content-specific, researched-based intervention strategies and progress monitoring tools, approved by the school district, are used with the student. After the Student Support Team meeting, the student continues to meet for RTI/MTSS in a small group with the Intervention Specialist for targeted instruction and progress monitoring, plus an additional small group session with the intervention specialist held via webcam for additional student observation. Data is collected and recorded for up to 12 weeks. Data is reviewed periodically during these 12 weeks by the Student Support Team. Other school-based assessment data is reviewed along with this data to determine if the student should be referred for more intensive support, which may include a change in interventions and progress monitoring, as well as a decision to recommend an evaluation to determine eligibility for special education services. An evaluation for phonological processing or speech/language therapy at the elementary school level may also be included if the progress monitoring data and webcam observations raise other learning or behavior concerns.

### **Middle Grade Band (6-8)**

#### *Tier 2 Interventions*

When students do not adequately respond to Tier 1 instruction, targeted services and interventions are added as the next support layer. The goal is to reach students who are at risk by providing interventions to help fill in the gaps before more specialized instruction is needed. At the Tier 2 level, GCA Middle School teachers invite students to small group sessions twice weekly and use evidence-based interventions and tools, including iReady, to supplement Tier 1

instruction. Progress monitoring is conducted weekly to determine the intervention's impact on the targeted concern. Data Points are collected weekly.

### *Tier 3 Interventions*

When students do not adequately respond to Tier 2 targeted interventions, an SST meeting is held to determine the next layer of support. Tier 3 is applied while Tier 2 supports are continued. Tier 3 includes intensive research-based interventions provided individually or in small groups. It is distinguished from Tier 2 by the frequency of sessions, smaller group size, and the expertise of an intervention specialist. Current Tier intervention tools include iReady.

Students are monitored, and SST meetings are held every six weeks to determine next steps. Students demonstrating growth may stay at Tier 3 or move to Tier 2. Students who are not showing growth may require more intensive interventions, or if interventions at this level prove to be inadequate, students may be considered for specialized services.

## **Secondary Grade Band (9-12)**

### *Tier 2 Interventions*

The MTSS team uses universal screeners (MAP and Milestones scores) to determine if a student may need Tier 2 interventions and support. Once identified for Tier 2, the student is enrolled in the Study Skills elective course, where they participate in academic and/or behavioral interventions based on student-specific needs. Intervention Specialists review student data and set realistic yet rigorous goals for their students. Students should work on assigned interventions or lessons and then complete a weekly probe to measure student progress or growth.

Once a month, the MTSS team will review Tier 2 data and determine which students should remain on Tier 2 and which may need additional support. Students who have met their goals or are progressing may stay at Tier 2 or move down to Tier 1. Students who are showing minimal or no progress may need additional intervention at the Tier 3 level.

### *Tier 3 Interventions*

If a Tier 2 student shows minimal or no progress with his or her current interventions, an SST (Student Support Team) meeting may be scheduled to review data and determine more appropriate supports. If a student is elevated to Tier 3, he or she will continue attending Tier 2 sessions with the content teacher. Still, he or she will also receive Tier 3 intervention with the school-level Intervention Specialist. The Intervention Specialist will provide more individualized intervention while collecting

student progress data. Interventions Specialists will utilize IXL for Tier 3 interventions and progress monitoring.

Every six weeks, the Student Support Team will reconvene to review the student's Tier 3 data and determine how to proceed. The team may decide that the student has made sufficient progress and can return to the Tier 2 level. However, the team may adjust or implement new interventions if the student shows little or no progress. The team may also decide to refer the student for a psychoeducational evaluation to determine eligibility for Special Education services.

## **Behavior Interventions**

### *Tier 2 Interventions*

At GCA, students receive Tier 2 interventions through a once-a-week Check-In with a Behavior Intervention Specialist. The student's Check-In will focus on Attendance and Assignment Completion. Behavior Intervention Specialists may also complete classroom observations to observe on-task and off-task behavior.

### *Tier 3 Interventions*

Students receiving Tier 3 interventions continue participating in the Check-In, Check-Out system by attending an additional weekly session with a Behavior Intervention Specialist. An Engagement Contract is introduced to the student, which outlines specific and individualized behavior expectations for the student. Scheduled observations will also be implemented for students receiving Tier 3 support for behavior.

Student Support Team (SST) meetings are held for these students every six weeks to check progress and make decisions based on progress monitoring data collected through classroom observations and check-in and check-out sessions.

# Frequently Asked Questions About MTSS

*From GaDOE Website*

## **For Parents**

### **What is Georgia’s Tiered System of Supports for Students?**

A tiered system of supports is being implemented statewide and has five essential components, including Screening, Progress Monitoring, Multi-Level Prevention System, and Data-Based Decision Making. Georgia added Infrastructure as a fifth component to help districts and schools develop a systemic and preventive educational framework. The critical elements of Infrastructure are Leadership, Effective Teaming, Professional Learning, and Family & Community Engagement.

### **Why does Georgia’s Tiered System of Supports for Students matter?**

When all the essential components are implemented as intended, results include sustained academic improvement, more efficient use of resources and staff, decreased inappropriate special education services, and reduced student grade retention. Schools and districts have also seen a drop in expulsions, behavioral referrals, and suspension rates.

### **What is required to improve outcomes for students?**

- To be successful, everyone must be involved in the process (parents, teachers, administrators, community members, etc.).
- The framework improves response times and helps educators rapidly respond to student needs.
- The framework aligns teams and school systems, helping to streamline information and resources necessary to improve student learning.
- Educators and families must work together to prevent poor outcomes for all students and ensure students have the tools to be successful.
- ALL students are screened to identify those at risk for poor academic or behavioral outcomes.
- Progress monitoring provides information that allows teachers to target student needs better and appropriately match instruction, resources, and support.
- Teams are focused on prevention to make decisions that ensure all students continue improving.

### **How can parents and students get involved?**

- Frequently communicate with your child's teacher(s).
- Attend school functions such as parent-teacher conferences.
- Monitor and assist with your child's homework assignments.
- Find out what skills and knowledge your child is expected to learn.
- Ask school team members the following questions:
  - What targeted supports does my child's school use if he/she struggles in the classroom?
  - What formal guidelines does my child's school use to identify progress toward goals?
  - How will I be informed of the progress my child is making?
  - What happens if my child is not making progress?

### **What if my child is recommended to receive additional support?**

- Attend team meetings. Remember the importance of your voice in your child's education.
- Help plan interventions for academic and/or behavioral needs.
- Practice and reinforce any strategies or educational plans at home.
- Always ask questions when things are not clear.

### **Where to go for more information:**

- You can contact your child's teacher or the school principal or visit Georgia's Tiered System of Supports for Students website.

### ***For Teachers***

#### **What do I do if a parent says their student needs an IEP?**

Assure the parent GCA has a multi-tiered system of support and a process for determining proper instructional and behavioral support to ensure the least restrictive environment. Use this process to determine whether a student is eligible for special support services. That begins with ensuring students participate in all available supports to provide accurate data to support the need for more intense interventions. Complete the [Staff Referral for Student Support Survey](#) immediately.

#### **What do I do if a parent says their child was in RTI or SST at the previous school?**

GCA staff will need to request records of the supports and interventions to determine prior supports and adjust to the virtual setting. Contact the Grade Band MTSS Interventions Coordinator.

**What do I do if a parent sends me a psychological evaluation/medical information regarding a student?**

Thank them for sharing this information with you, and let them know it will be reviewed for educational planning. Then, complete the [Staff Referral for Student Support Survey](#) immediately and ensure that documents received are uploaded in Infinite Campus (Upload under SPED Documents).

**What do I do if a parent says their student has a condition or medical issue and cannot attend school or participate every day?**

Please find out as many details as possible and let parents know they will be contacted regarding the situation. Medical records and other information will need to be collected. Contact the Grade Band MTSS Intervention Coordinator and 504 Coordinator.

**What do I do if a parent says their student has an IEP or had an IEP at their previous school or a few years ago?**

Please ask parents to send copies of the current or previous IEP information. Please contact the Special Education department with the student information so records can be requested.

**What do I do if a parent requests testing to see if their child is dyslexic or has a learning disability?**

GCA has a multi-tiered support system and a process for determining proper instructional and behavioral supports to ensure the least restrictive environment. It also uses this process to determine whether a student is eligible for special support services. However, if a parent requests an evaluation or Special Education services, please complete the [Staff Referral for Student Support Survey](#) immediately.

**What do I do if a parent says a child is in private speech or other therapies and wants it through the school?**

Speech and Language Impairment is an eligibility category of Special Education, and a student must go through the MTSS process to qualify for this service. Private therapies can only be transferred to the school with a student meeting eligibility and moving through the MTSS process. Please contact the MTSS SST Supervisor if a parent requests speech services or an evaluation.

**What do I do if a student is not attending classes and is below level?**

For a student to move up the tiers of interventions, there has to be data demonstrating interventions have not been successful. If a student does not participate in interventions, it cannot be determined if the interventions have been effective. Discuss with your Instructional Support Services Assistant Principal for a plan of action and next steps to take.

# Section 504

*Deborah Wood, District 504 Supervisor*

## **Program Summary**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities. This federal civil rights law requires that students with disabilities receive a free and appropriate education. Students with a physical or mental impairment limiting one or more major life activities may qualify for a 504 plan.

To determine 504 eligibility, a student must demonstrate, as a result of an evaluation, to have a physical or mental disability/impairment (or having a history of a physical or mental disability/impairment) that substantially limits one or more major life activities. A major life activity includes the following: caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, working, and learning.

At Georgia Cyber Academy, we are committed to providing all our students with an exemplary, individualized, and engaging educational experience. This policy and procedure manual has been created to assist staff working with our families who may need a 504 plan for their children.

## **Legal Overview**

According to the Office of Civil Rights (OCR), "Section 504 is a federal law designed to protect the rights of individuals with disabilities in programs and activities that receive Federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education (ED). Section 504 provides: 'No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States . . . shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.'" (U.S. Department of Education, 2018)



## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **504 Supervisor**

The Section 504 District Supervisor is a highly qualified, state-certified educator responsible for ensuring students with disabilities, identified by Section 504, are receiving specific and individualized course content based on their 504 Plan in an online environment.

#### *Responsibilities*

- Utilizes Child Find and similar services to pull new 504 plan referrals; schedules and facilitates meetings; follows up with all three grade bands.
- Plans and facilitates all 504 district trainings
- Conducts bi-weekly meetings with School Level Coordinators
- Addresses teacher and administrator concerns promptly
- Assists School Level Coordinators with any 504 inquiries
- Receives and distributes transfer plans from previous schools
- Ensures implementation of the school district-approved 504 process
- Collects and maintains all 504 data
- Ensures 504 plan accommodations are updated in the testing platform and coded before testing
- Serves as Point of Contact (POC) for 504 questions during state testing
- Maintains the GCA 504 Manual
- Collects data for monthly reports
- Attends all school and district meetings

### **Section 504 School Level Coordinator**

The Section 504 School Level Coordinator is a highly qualified, state-certified educator responsible for ensuring students with disabilities, identified by Section 504, are receiving specific and individualized course content based on their 504 plan in an online environment.

#### *Responsibilities*

- Facilitates school-level 504 plan renewal meetings and plan transfer meetings;
- Facilitates the collection and maintenance of student medical documentation; uploads documentation into Infinite Campus;
- Ensures testing accommodations are up-to-date and uploads plans for State Testing
- Responds to flags in Infinite Campus and online platforms;

- Communicates with parents/Learning Coaches, and teachers regarding all 504 inquiries
- Conducts classroom visits to monitor the implementation of 504 plan accommodations for students;
- Receives and uploads medical forms for eligibility;
- Facilitates school-based teacher training and answers questions when necessary;
- Attends weekly open offices with the compliance specialist to review data for students;
- Attends monthly and weekly district, school, and department meetings;
- Provides communication and updates regarding 504 to teachers via the school newsletter and/or email blasts;
- Prepares data and attends monthly data meetings and updates information;
- Meets with school-level leads, administration, collaborating teachers, students, and parents/Learning Coaches to discuss student progress and instructional support through examination of the 504 plan

## **Glossary of Commonly Used Terms**

*Terms From Georgia Department of Education Website*

**Accommodation:** An accommodation is a change in how or where your child is taught—or the materials used for teaching. Accommodations can help kids who are struggling to work around their weaknesses. For instance, kids with trouble writing may be allowed to answer test questions orally. Even with accommodations, kids are expected to learn the same content as their peers.

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):** This federal civil rights law prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities. It covers schools, the workplace, and public places. ADA works in tandem with Section 504. Section 504 applies only to K–12 public schools. If your child has a disability, ADA will cover him in the workplace and as an adult.

**Disability:** Section 504 defines a disability as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a person’s ability to participate in a major life activity, such as learning. Section 504 has a broad definition of “disability.” This is why kids who aren’t eligible for an Individualized Educational Program (IEP), including some children with ADHD, might be eligible for a 504 plan.

**General education curriculum:** This is the knowledge and skills all students must master. The curriculum varies from state to state. The goal of Section 504 is to make sure that students with disabilities have access to or can take part in the general curriculum.

**Least restrictive environment (LRE):** Students with disabilities must be taught in the same setting as students without disabilities as much as possible. The school must offer services or support to help them succeed in a general education classroom.

**Major life activities:** These can include learning, reading, thinking, writing, and concentrating. A child’s disability may substantially limit one or more major life activities. If this is the case, they need to be addressed in the 504 plan.

**Modification:** A modification is a change in what a student is expected to learn. For example, instead of reading a book at his grade level, your child might read a book

written for two grade levels lower. Generally, a child who needs modifications would have an IEP, not a 504 plan.

**The Rehabilitation Act of 1973:** A civil rights law that prohibits disability discrimination. It requires reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities. Section 504 is the part of this law that applies to public K–12 schools.

**Supplementary aids and services:** These are supports to help a child learn in the general education classroom. Examples are equipment or assistive technology, such as audiobooks or highlighted classroom notes.

## **504 Processes and Procedures**

### **Child Find**

According to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the District has a responsibility to identify, refer, evaluate, and, if eligible, provide a free, appropriate public education to disabled students who do not fit the criteria to qualify for Special Education services. For additional information about the rights of parents of eligible children or for answers to any questions you may have regarding eligibility and placement into Section 504 programs, please contact the District's Section 504 Supervisor.

The purpose of the 504 plan is to provide legal accommodations for disabled students who do not fit the criteria to qualify for Special Education services. A student who may need accommodations within the intent of Section 504 is one who:

- Has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, including, but not limited to, learning, reading, thinking, concentrating, and communicating. A major life activity also includes the operation of a major bodily function.
- Has a record of such impairment; or
- Is regarded as having such an impairment.

504 services are available to disabled students not served under special education and IDEA. To qualify under 504:

- A student must have a documented disability (i.e., a doctor's note regarding ADHD or another physical or mental condition, a psychological report, a vision-eye report, etc.)
- There must be proof this disability substantially limits a major life activity.

Georgia Cyber Academy District Child Find Procedures include:

- Online Registration (OLR) questions that address previous diagnoses or Section 504 Plans.
- Announcements will be made on the GCA website and other media.
- Periodic emails to GCA families.
- Inquiries are received from GCA parents/legal guardians and staff members.

### **504 Referrals**

1. Suppose a staff member learns that a child may have a physical or mental impairment. Then, the staff member should determine how this condition impacts the student's ability to access education.

2. The staff member should complete the [Staff Referral for Student Support Survey](#) immediately.
3. The Inquiry Specialist will contact the student's parent or legal guardian and schedule a 504 Informational meeting within ten days of receiving the referral. The Inquiry Specialist will email the parent/LG a Notice of Meeting and document the contact in Infinite Campus.
4. During the 504 Informational Meeting, the Inquiry Specialist will listen to the parent/LG's concerns and share information regarding Section 504 and GCA's 504 eligibility process. The Inquiry Specialist will document the meeting's discussion on the student's 504 Informational Meeting form.
5. Following the meeting, the Inquiry Specialist will email the parent/LG a copy of the meeting notes and a copy of the GCA Medical form.
6. Until appropriate medical documentation is received or until the parent/LG declines the 504 process, the Inquiry Specialist will follow up with the parent/LG every ten days by email, reminding them to send medical documentation to continue the 504 process.
7. Once appropriate medical documentation is received, the 504 School Level Coordinator will schedule a 504 eligibility meeting with the parent/LG to determine program eligibility.

### **Informational Meetings**

When a parent requests additional support for a student, an Instructional Support Services team member should schedule an Informational meeting with the parent. If the concern is medical only, the Inquiry Specialist can schedule, hold, and document the 504 Informational meeting. If the parent/LG's concern is medical and academic, the Inquiry Specialist may have a joint Informational meeting to determine the next steps of support for the student.

### **Making a 504 Referral in Infinite Campus**

All 504 referrals for initial meetings will be input into the 504 Module in Infinite Campus by the 504 Coordinator or the 504 Supervisor.

### **Requests for 504 Evaluation**

The District recommends that the parent submit appropriate medical documentation of the student's diagnosis(es), which details how the condition impacts the student's access to learning. The 504 Coordinator and/or the District 504 Supervisor will review all paperwork and submit a 504 Meeting Referral to request a meeting; evaluations can consist of reviews of current student data and/or formal academic & behavioral testing. If no formal testing is required to support eligibility,

the School Level Coordinator and/or the District 504 Supervisor should schedule a 504 eligibility meeting.

### **Evaluation Process**

According to the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights, determining whether a child is a qualified disabled student under Section 504 begins with the evaluation process at the elementary and secondary school level. Section 504 requires the use of evaluation procedures that ensure that children are not misclassified, unnecessarily labeled as having a disability, or incorrectly placed based on inappropriate selection, administration, or interpretation of evaluation materials.

#### *What is an appropriate evaluation under Section 504?*

Recipient school districts must establish standards and procedures for initial evaluations and periodic re-evaluations of students who need or are believed to need special education and/or related services because of disability. The Section 504 regulatory provision at 34 C.F.R. 104.35(b) requires school districts to individually evaluate a student before classifying the student as having a disability or providing the student with special education. Tests used for this purpose must be selected and administered to ensure that the test results accurately reflect the student's aptitude or achievement or other factor being measured rather than the student's disability, except where those are the factors being measured. Section 504 also requires that tests and other evaluation materials include those tailored to evaluate the specific areas of educational need and not merely those designed to provide a single intelligence quotient. The tests and other evaluation materials must be validated for the specific purpose for which they are used and appropriately administered by trained personnel.

#### *How much is enough information to document that a student has a disability?*

At the elementary and secondary education level, the required information is determined by the multi-disciplinary committee gathered to evaluate the student. The committee should include persons knowledgeable about the student, the meaning of the evaluation data, and the placement options. The committee members must determine if they have enough information to make a knowledgeable decision as to whether or not the student has a disability. The Section 504 regulatory provision at 34 C.F.R. 104.35(c) requires that school districts draw from various sources in the evaluation process to minimize the possibility of error. The information obtained from all such sources must be documented, and all significant factors related to the student's learning process must be considered. These sources

and factors may include aptitude and achievement tests, teacher recommendations, physical condition, social and cultural background, and adaptive behavior. In evaluating a student suspected of having a disability, it is unacceptable to rely on presumptions and stereotypes regarding persons with disabilities or classes of such persons. Compliance with the IDEA regarding the group of persons present when an evaluation or placement decision is made is satisfactory under Section 504. (Protecting Students With Disabilities. (2018, September 25). Retrieved May 05, 2019, from (U.S. Department of Education 2018)

### **Annual Reviews**

An annual review meeting will discuss and document possible student accommodation plan updates. This meeting must occur at least annually. At the beginning of the school year, the 504 SLC will schedule meetings with new enrollees' parents/legal guardians to transfer students' 504 accommodation plans to GCA. Within the first semester of the school year, the 504 SLC will schedule review meetings for all returning GCA students to review students' progress and accommodations. If there has been a change in the student's medical condition, the parent should submit updated documentation before the meeting to consider updating the student's accommodations.

### **Grievance and Complaints**

Georgia Cyber Academy's policy is not to discriminate based on disability. Georgia Cyber Academy has adopted an internal grievance procedure providing prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action prohibited by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services regulations implementing the Act. Section 504 prohibits discrimination based on disability in any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. The Law and Regulations may be examined in the office of the Instructional Support Services Director and/or the Section 504 Supervisor, who has been designated to coordinate the efforts of Georgia Cyber Academy to comply with Section 504.

Any person who believes she or he has been subjected to discrimination based on disability may file a grievance under this procedure. Georgia Cyber Academy may not retaliate against anyone who files a grievance or cooperates in the investigation of a grievance.



**Procedure:**

- Grievances must be submitted to the Instructional Support Services Director and/or the Section 504 Supervisor within 30 days of the date the person filing the grievance becomes aware of the alleged discriminatory action.
- A complaint must be in writing, containing the name and address of the person filing it. The complaint must state the problem or action alleged to be discriminatory and the remedy or relief sought.
- The Instructional Support Services Director and/or the Section 504 Supervisor (or her/his designee) shall investigate the complaint. This investigation may be informal, but it must be thorough, allowing all interested persons to submit evidence relevant to the complaint. The Instructional Support Services Director and/or the Section 504 Supervisor will maintain Georgia Cyber Academy's files and records relating to such grievances.
- The Instructional Support Services Director and/or the Section 504 Supervisor will issue a written decision on the grievance no later than 30 days after it is filed.
- The person filing the grievance may appeal the decision of the Instructional Support Services Director and/or the Section 504 Supervisor by writing to the Superintendent within 15 days of receiving the Instructional Support Services Director and/or the Section 504 Supervisor's decision. The Superintendent shall issue a written decision in response to the appeal no later than 30 days after its filing.
- The availability and use of this grievance procedure do not prevent a person from filing a complaint of discrimination based on disability with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights.

Georgia Cyber Academy will make appropriate arrangements to ensure that disabled persons are provided with other accommodations, if needed, to participate in this grievance process. Such arrangements may include, but are not limited to, providing interpreters for the deaf, providing taped cassettes of material for the blind, or assuring a barrier-free location for the proceedings. The Instructional Support Services Director and/or the Section 504 Supervisor will be responsible for such arrangements.

# Accommodations Manual

## Research

Accommodations: General program accommodations/adjustments or services are always made on a case-by-case basis and are individualized. Accommodations are to be reasonable and are intended to provide persons with disabilities compensation for their functional limitation(s) due to a mental or physical impairment. Where Section 504 is concerned, accommodations are made to bring a student with a disability to the same starting point as a non-disabled student.

## Commonly Used Accommodations

### *Allergies*

- Possible Accommodation and Strategies:
  - Small group or Individual work environment as needed
  - Extended Time
  - Frequent monitored breaks
- At Home Strategies:
  - The student will self-manage to ensure a clean work environment.
  - Reinforce self-monitoring and self-reporting of behaviors.
  - Utilize recordings if repetition of material is needed.
- Medical Health Plan:
  - Allergy statement: There is no guarantee that students will not come into contact with allergens at state testing.
  - The parent or legal guardian may remain on-site to provide assistance or administer medication. However, per state guidelines, the parent or legal guardian may not remain in the testing room during the test administration.
  - In case of a severe allergic reaction, call 911

### *Arthritis*

- Possible Accommodation and Strategies:
  - Small Group
  - Preferential Seating
  - Extended Time
  - Frequent monitored breaks
  - Use modified physical education assignments/activities.
- At Home Strategies:
  - Reinforce self-monitoring and self-reporting of behaviors.

- Utilize recordings if repetition of material is needed.

### *Asthma*

- Possible Accommodation and Strategies:
  - Preferential seating
  - Small group
  - Frequent monitored breaks
  - Extended time
  - Optimal time of day for instruction
- Medical Health Plan:
  - There is no guarantee that students will not come into contact with allergens at state testing.
  - The parent or legal guardian may remain on-site to provide assistance or administer medication. However, per state guidelines, the parent or legal guardian may not remain in the testing room during the test administration.

### *ADHD*

- Possible Accommodation and Strategies:
  - Small group or Individualized work environment
  - Preferential seating
  - Frequent monitored breaks
  - Extended time
  - Instructions will be repeated and/or paraphrased for clarity.
  - Optimal time of day for instruction
  - Adaptive furniture: Chewelry, fidget spinner, balance ball.
- At Home Strategies:
  - Block Schedule
  - Print slides from each class to use for taking notes
  - Seat student away from distractions (video games, TV, extra noise)
  - Use of a timer to help student stay on task
  - Break the list of assignments into smaller chunks (work on multiple lessons for one subject each day or work in chunks of time).
  - Provide a quiet work space for your student.
  - Write or print out daily assignments.
  - Check for student's completion of assignments.
  - Use incentives to help reinforce positive behaviors.
  - Reinforce self-monitoring and self-reporting of behaviors.
  - Utilize recordings if repetition of material is needed.

- Reinforce self-advocating behaviors.

### *Bipolar Disorder/Schizophrenia*

- Possible Accommodations and Strategies:
  - Small group or individual instruction will be provided when needed.
  - Extended time
  - Frequent monitored breaks
  - Based on a documented diagnosis, the student can supplement instruction with recordings when needed. The student will email the teacher and access recordings within 24 hours of a missed session.
  - Examiner familiar to student (for state testing)
- At Home Strategies:
  - Provide a quiet workspace, free from distractions.
  - Block scheduling or chunking assignments.
  - Utilize recordings if repetition of instruction is needed.
  - Reinforce self-advocating behaviors.
  - Write or print out daily assignments.
  - Check for student's completion of assignments.

### *Cerebral Palsy*

- Possible Accommodations and Strategies:
  - Teachers will be aware of health care needs.
  - Preferential seating – Student must be seated in an area accommodating his/her wheelchair or other adaptive needs.
  - Use modified physical education assignments/activities.
  - Small group or individual instruction will be provided when needed
  - Frequent monitored breaks
- At Home Strategies:
  - Provide a quiet work space for your student.
  - Write or print out daily assignments.
  - Break the list of assignments into smaller chunks (work on multiple lessons for one subject each day or work in chunks of time).
  - Reinforce self-advocating behaviors.

### *Cystic Fibrosis*

- Possible Accommodations and Strategies:
  - Based on documented diagnosis, the student can supplement instruction with recordings when needed.
  - Extended time

- Frequent monitored breaks
- Small group instruction will be provided when needed.
- At Home Strategies:
  - Provide a quiet work space for your student.
  - Break the list of assignments into smaller chunks (work on multiple lessons for one subject each day or work in chunks of time).
  - Communicate with teachers how the condition is managed with your student.
- Medical Health Plan:
  - If needed at testing, students will be allowed frequent monitored breaks for breathing treatment administered by the parent.
  - If needed at testing, the student will be allowed a private place for “coughing.”
  - The parent or legal guardian may remain on-site to provide assistance or administer medication. However, per state guidelines, the parent or legal guardian may not remain in the testing room during the test administration.

### *Diabetes*

- Possible Accommodations and Strategies:
  - Small group or individual instruction will be provided when needed.
  - Extended time
  - Frequent monitored breaks
  - Based on documented diagnosis, the student can supplement instruction with recordings when needed.
- At Home Strategies:
  - Communicate with teachers how well diabetes is managed with your student.
  - Reinforce self-advocating behaviors.
- Medical Health Plan:
  - Student must have access to glucose monitoring supplies as needed.
  - Student will have access to snacks and water throughout the day
  - Student will have access to bathroom breaks whenever necessary
  - The student must have access to a Dex-com glucose monitor, and the cell phone must stay with the examiner at testing and be within range of the student at all times.
  - The parent or legal guardian may remain on-site to provide assistance or administer medication. However, per state guidelines, the parent or

legal guardian may not remain in the testing room during the test administration.

- If needed, call 911.

### *Anxiety/Depression*

- Possible Accommodations and Strategies:
  - Small group or individual instruction will be provided when needed.
  - Extended time
  - Frequent monitored breaks
  - Based on a documented diagnosis, the student can supplement instruction with recordings when needed. The student will email the teacher and access recordings within 24 hours of a missed session.
  - Examiner familiar to student (for state testing)
- At Home Strategies:
  - Provide a quiet workspace, free from distractions.
  - Block scheduling or chunking assignments.
  - Utilize recordings if repetition of instruction is needed.
  - Reinforce self-advocating behaviors.
  - Write or print out daily assignments.
  - Check for student's completion of assignments.

### *Student with Special Health Needs*

- Possible Accommodations and Strategies:
  - Teachers will be aware of health care needs.
  - Frequent monitored breaks
  - Extended time
  - Preferential seating
  - Small group or individual instruction will be provided when needed
  - Recordings (vs. attending live synchronous sessions)
  - Optimal time of day for instruction
  - Instructions will be repeated and paraphrased for clarity.
  - Adaptive furniture: Chewelry, fidget spinner, balance ball.
  - Use modified physical education assignments/activities.
  - Familiar examiner (for State testing)
- At Home Strategies:
  - Block Schedule
  - Print slides from each class to use for taking notes
  - Use of a timer to help student stay on task

- Break the list of assignments into smaller chunks (work on multiple lessons for one subject each day or work in chunks of time).
- Provide a quiet work space for your student.
- Write or print out daily assignments.
- Check for student's completion of assignments.
- Use incentives to help reinforce positive behaviors.
- Reinforce self-monitoring and self-reporting of behaviors.
- Utilize recordings if repetition of material is needed.
- Reinforce self-advocating behaviors.
- Medical Health Plan:
  - The parent or legal guardian may remain on-site to provide assistance or administer medication. However, per state guidelines, the parent or legal guardian may not remain in the testing room during the test administration.
  - If needed, call 911.

### *Encopresis/Enuresis*

- Accommodations and Strategies:
  - Frequent monitored breaks
  - Extended time on daily assignments and assessments- time and a half. MAP Assessments and Interim assessments must be taken during the regularly scheduled assessment window.
- At Home Strategies:
  - Change of clothes available.
  - Create a plan of response to events.
- Medical Health Plan Recommendations:
  - The parent or legal guardian may remain on-site to provide assistance or administer medication. However, per state guidelines, the parent or legal guardian may not remain in the testing room during the test administration.

### *Epilepsy*

- Accommodations and Strategies:
  - Frequent monitored breaks
  - Extended time on daily assignments and assessments- time and a half. MAP Assessments and Interim assessments must be taken during the regularly scheduled assessment window.
- At Home Strategies:
  - Utilize recordings if repetition of material is needed

- Observe for triggers and let teachers/504 Coordinator know
- Print off notes/slides
- Medical Health Plan Recommendations:
  - Monitor and assess the student for breathing difficulties
  - Preferential seating in front of the room and away from doors and away from flashing/blinking lights because seizures are photo-convulsive; the examiner needs to watch for signs of staring off or not being responsive; a student may appear to stare off into space but is having a seizure; if the student is about to have a grand mal seizure and body will become rigid.
  - If the examiner sees a student falling from a chair, help get the student to the floor, protect their head, turn on their side, and notify the parent. The parent will remain on site. If the seizure lasts longer than five minutes, the parent will administer emergency meds. The parent will let you know if 911 should be called.

### *Hearing Impairment*

- Accommodations and Strategies:
  - Repetition of directions
  - Extended time on daily assignments and assessments- time and a half. MAP Assessments and Interim assessments must be taken during the regularly scheduled assessment window.
  - Provide an interpreter for school events (such as graduation) when necessary or requested
  - Assistive Technology
- At Home Strategies:
  - Utilize recordings if repetition of material is needed
  - Print off copies of notes/slides
  - Present information visually when needed
  - Assistive Technology
  - Provide an audio amplification system
  - Desktop Speakers
- Medical Health Plan Recommendations:
  - Audio amplification system

### *Leukemia*

- Accommodations and Strategies:
  - Frequent monitored breaks



- Extended time on daily assignments and assessments- time and a half. MAP Assessments and Interim assessments must be taken during the regularly scheduled assessment window.
- Teachers will be aware of health care needs.
- Optimal time of day for instruction
- Use modified physical education assignments/activities.
- Small group instruction will be provided when needed
- Recordings (vs. attending live synchronous sessions)
- At Home Strategies
  - Utilize recordings if repetition of material is needed
  - Block Schedule
  - Print slides from each class to use for taking notes
  - Break the list of assignments into smaller chunks (work on multiple lessons for one subject each day or work in chunks of time).
- Medical Health Plan Recommendations:
  - The parent or legal guardian may remain on-site to provide assistance or administer medication. However, per state guidelines, the parent or legal guardian may not remain in the testing room during the test administration.
  - Small group or individual
  - Optimal time of day

### *Orthopedically Impaired*

- Accommodations and Strategies:
  - Frequent monitored breaks
  - Extended time on daily assignments and assessments- time and a half. MAP Assessments and Interim assessments must be taken during the regularly scheduled assessment window.
  - Teachers will be aware of health care needs.
  - Use modified physical education assignments/activities.
  - Physical Therapy
- At Home Strategies:
  - Print slides from each class to use for taking notes

### *Tourette's Syndrome*

- Possible Accommodations and Strategies:
  - Teachers will be aware of health care needs.
  - Frequent monitored breaks
  - Extended time

- Preferential seating
- Small group or individual instruction will be provided when needed
- Recordings (vs. attending live synchronous sessions)
- Optimal time of day for instruction
- Instructions will be repeated and paraphrased for clarity.
- Adaptive furniture: Chewelry, fidget spinner, balance ball.
- Use modified physical education assignments/activities.
- At Home Strategies:
  - Block Schedule
  - Print slides from each class to use for taking notes
  - Seat student away from distractions (video games, TV, extra noise)
  - Use of a timer to help student stay on task
  - Break the list of assignments into smaller chunks (work on multiple lessons for one subject each day or work in chunks of time).
  - Provide a quiet work space for your student.
  - Write or print out daily assignments.
  - Check for student's completion of assignments.
  - Use incentives to help reinforce positive behaviors.
  - Reinforce self-monitoring and self-reporting of behaviors.
  - Utilize recordings if repetition of material is needed.
  - Reinforce self-advocating behaviors.
- Medical Health Plan:
  - The parent or legal guardian may remain on-site to provide assistance or administer medication. However, per state guidelines, the parent or legal guardian may not remain in the testing room during the test administration.
  - Small group or Individual Testing
  - Preferential seating

### *Traumatic Brain Injury*

- Possible Accommodations and Strategies:
  - Teachers will be aware of health care needs.
  - Frequent monitored breaks
  - Extended time
  - Preferential seating
  - Small group or individual instruction will be provided when needed
  - Recordings (vs. attending live synchronous sessions)
  - Optimal time of day for instruction
  - Instructions will be repeated and paraphrased for clarity.

- There is no guarantee that students will not come into contact with allergens at state testing.
- Adaptive furniture: Chewelry, fidget spinner, balance ball.
- Use modified physical education assignments/activities.
- At Home Strategies:
  - Block Schedule
  - Print slides from each class to use for taking notes
  - Seat student away from distractions (video games, TV, extra noise)
  - Use of a timer to help student stay on task
  - Break the list of assignments into smaller chunks (work on multiple lessons for one subject each day or work in chunks of time).
  - Provide a quiet work space for your student.
  - Write or print out daily assignments.
  - Check for student's completion of assignments.
  - Use incentives to help reinforce positive behaviors.
  - Reinforce self-monitoring and self-reporting of behaviors.
  - Utilize recordings if repetition of material is needed.
  - Reinforce self-advocating behaviors.
- Medical Health Plan:
  - The parent or legal guardian may remain on-site to provide assistance or administer medication. However, per state guidelines, the parent or legal guardian may not remain in the testing room during the test administration.

### *Tuberculosis*

- Possible Accommodations and Strategies:
  - Teachers will be aware of health care needs.
  - Frequent monitored breaks
  - Extended time
  - Preferential seating
  - Small group or individual instruction will be provided when needed
  - Recordings (vs. attending live synchronous sessions)
  - Optimal time of day for instruction
  - Instructions will be repeated and paraphrased for clarity.
  - Use modified physical education assignments/activities.
- At Home Strategies:
  - Block Schedule
  - Print slides from each class to use for taking notes
  - Seat student away from distractions (video games, TV, extra noise)

- Use of a timer to help student stay on task
- Break the list of assignments into smaller chunks (work on multiple lessons for one subject each day or work in chunks of time).
- Provide a quiet work space for your student.
- Write or print out daily assignments.
- Check for student's completion of assignments.
- Use incentives to help reinforce positive behaviors.
- Reinforce self-monitoring and self-reporting of behaviors.
- Utilize recordings if repetition of material is needed.
- Reinforce self-advocating behaviors.
- Medical Health Plan:
  - The parent or legal guardian may remain on-site to provide assistance or administer medication. However, per state guidelines, the parent or legal guardian may not remain in the testing room during the test administration.

### *Visual Impairment*

- Possible Accommodations and Strategies:
  - Teachers will be aware of health care needs.
  - Frequent breaks
  - Extended time
  - Preferential seating
  - Small group or individual instruction will be provided when needed
  - Recordings (vs. attending live synchronous sessions)
  - Optimal time of day for instruction
  - Instructions will be repeated and paraphrased for clarity.
  - There is no guarantee that students will not come into contact with allergens at state testing.
  - Adaptive furniture: Chewelry, fidget spinner, balance ball.
  - Use modified physical education assignments/activities.
- At Home Strategies:
  - Block Schedule
  - Print slides from each class to use for taking notes
  - Seat student away from distractions (video games, TV, extra noise)
  - Use of a timer to help student stay on task
  - Break the list of assignments into smaller chunks (work on multiple lessons for one subject each day or work in chunks of time).
  - Provide a quiet work space for your student.
  - Write or print out daily assignments.

- Check for student's completion of assignments.
- Use incentives to help reinforce positive behaviors.
- Reinforce self-monitoring and self-reporting of behaviors.
- Utilize recordings if repetition of material is needed.
- Reinforce self-advocating behaviors.

*Weight Issues: Diagnosis of Obesity, Anorexia, or Bulimia*

- Possible Accommodations and Strategies:
  - Teachers will be aware of health care needs.
  - Frequent monitored breaks
  - Extended time
  - Preferential seating
  - Small group or individual instruction will be provided when needed
  - Recordings (vs. attending live synchronous sessions)
  - Optimal time of day for instruction
  - Instructions will be repeated and paraphrased for clarity.
  - There is no guarantee that students will not come into contact with allergens at state testing.
  - Adaptive furniture: Chewelry, fidget spinner, balance ball.
  - Use modified physical education assignments/activities.
- At Home Strategies:
  - Block Schedule
  - Print slides from each class to use for taking notes
  - Seat student away from distractions (video games, TV, extra noise)
  - Use of a timer to help student stay on task
  - Break the list of assignments into smaller chunks (work on multiple lessons for one subject each day or work in chunks of time).
  - Provide a quiet work space for your student.
  - Write or print out daily assignments.
  - Check for student's completion of assignments.
  - Use incentives to help reinforce positive behaviors.
  - Reinforce self-monitoring and self-reporting of behaviors.
  - Utilize recordings if repetition of material is needed.
  - Reinforce self-advocating behaviors.
- Medical Health Plan:
  - Preferential seating

## **Supporting 504 Students**

### **Progress Monitoring**

504 School Level Coordinator will periodically check in on students to ensure accommodations are being implemented by the teachers and accessed by the students. 504 SLCs will confirm this information with the teachers via data meetings, phone calls, surveys, and emails. SLCs may also review students' testing data, including test results and time spent on the assessments. The SLC will communicate progress to the student and/or parent via phone, email, or individual/small group, and SLCs will document the contact in the Infinite Campus Contact Log.

### **504 Amendments/Addendums**

504 Amendments or addendums can be made at any time. Parents/Guardians/Students (if over 18) can request an amendment meeting by emailing or phoning the school principal, 504 Coordinator, 504 Supervisor, or other GCA staff member. 504 Amendments are made to adjust accommodations or when students have updated medical information that would change their supports, medications, or testing accommodations needed.

### **Re-Evaluation Meetings**

To continue eligibility for a 504 at GCA, the District recommends updating medical documentation (GCA Medical Form or psychological evaluation with diagnoses codes) every three years. The 504 Coordinator will contact families needing to return updated medical documentation by phone and email. It will be the responsibility of the 504 team to meet with the family during the first conference period (before November 1) and update this plan for the year. All teachers can identify their students with 504 plans by a red flag under 504 in Infinite Campus.

### **College Board Accommodations**

Any student with a 504 can request accommodations for assessments such as SAT, PSAT, ACT, and AP exams. These exams are through the College Board and the ACT. The 504 Coordinator will submit requests for accommodations through the College Board and the ACT. Before requesting accommodations, the parent must complete and return a consent form. This form should be uploaded in IC under PLP Documents. After a decision is made, the College Board and/or the ACT will send an email to let the coordinator know that a decision has been made. A decision letter will be available for download. The 504 Coordinator will download the letter, upload it to the PLP document tab, and send a copy to the parent.

**Graduation Accommodations**

During renewals in the fall, the Secondary Grade Band 504 Coordinator should ask seniors about potential accommodations needed for graduation. Make a note about graduation requirements in IC.

Once the graduation list is sent out in May, the Secondary Grade Band 504 Coordinator should call to confirm with 504 seniors the accommodations they discussed during renewal. Send all notes to the graduation administration team.

**Vocational Rehabilitation Referrals**

Vocational Rehab is an ideal program for students who would like to transition directly from school to work and may need some assistance with pre-employment skills. Students can be referred for Pre-Employment Transition Services as early as ninth grade. More information can be found on the [Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency website](#) and in the appendix of this manual. The Secondary Grade Band 504 SLC will be able to assist students and parents with a referral to this program.

**Diabetes Protocol**

For students with diabetes, a Diabetes Management Plan is required at the beginning of the school year, and the medical provider must complete it. A GCA medical form will also be required if the student has additional medical diagnoses. These forms must be received before the renewal of the Section 504 Plan for the school year. This information must accompany the student to any state testing.

## **Frequently Asked Questions about 504**

### **Who is protected by Section 504?**

Any otherwise qualified person with an impairment substantially limiting one or more major life activities is eligible for protection and services under Section 504. Any student regarded as having an impairment or a record of impairment is eligible for protection from discrimination.

### **What is a major life activity?**

Section 504 defines major life activities as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working.

### **What are “substantial limitations”?**

This term is not defined in the act or the regulations and is left to each agency. However, the Americans with Disabilities Act suggested that the term “substantially limits” be interpreted to mean that the student “is unable to perform a major life activity that the average student of approximately the same age can perform, or that the student is significantly restricted as to the condition, manner or duration under which a particular major life activity is performed as compared to the average student of approximately the same age.” This interpretation can provide some guidance in defining the phrase.

### **What is “reasonable accommodation”?**

Reasonable accommodation in the school setting is modifying or adjusting educational programs to afford students with disabilities equal opportunity to access them. Reasonable accommodations must be made for persons with disabilities unless the schools can show that the requested accommodations would impose undue hardship.

### **What protections are afforded to those with a “record of an impairment” or “regarded as having an impairment”?**

Under these prongs of the act, individuals are only eligible for protection from discrimination. For example, a student with a record of leukemia but currently in remission cannot be denied the opportunity to try out for the football team. Likewise, a student with an orthopedic impairment cannot automatically be regarded as disabled when, in reality, the student experiences only minimal limitations.



**Are IDEA (special education) students protected by Section 504?**

Students served through special education under IDEA are also covered under Section 504. However, individuals covered by Section 504 are often not covered by IDEA. The determining factor will be the severity of the disability and the need for special education-related services.

**Do students with an Individualized Education Program under IDEA need a 504 Plan as well?**

Yes and no. The student cannot be discriminated against based on history of impairment. If the 504 Committee determines that the student continues to have a disability that substantially limits a major life activity even though he does not meet IDEA eligibility requirements, the student would be eligible for services and protection under Prong 1 of Section 504.

**Can temporary disability qualify a child for accommodations under Section 504?**

In some instances, students with temporary disabilities are eligible for 504 protections. The committee should consider the impairment's nature and severity and its permanent or long-term impact.

**What protections are afforded to alcohol and/or drug-addicted students?**

Section 504 does not protect persons currently engaging in alcohol/drug use or casual users. It does protect individuals who have completed rehabilitation programs, persons who are participating in a rehabilitation program, and persons regarded erroneously as drug users.

**Who is responsible for implementing Section 504?**

Section 504 is considered a provision of general education. Therefore, it is the responsibility of classroom teachers and administrators to ensure that Section 504 accommodations are carried out.

**Who makes up the 504 Committee?**

According to the federal regulations: "...placement decisions are to be made by a group of persons who are knowledgeable about the child, the meaning of the evaluation data, placement options, least restrictive environment requirements, and comparable facilities" [34 C.F.R. §104.35(c)(3)]. Individuals who make up the SST are also appropriate for the 504 Committee. Many school systems use the SST to implement 504, although it is not required.

### **Is evaluation necessary to determine 504 eligibility?**

Under Section 504, no formal testing is required. The 504 Committee will look at grades over the past several years, teachers' reports, information from parents or other agencies, state assessment scores or other school-administered tests, observations, discipline reports, attendance records, health records, and adaptive behavior information. Schools must consider a variety of sources. A single source of information (such as a doctor's report) cannot be the only information considered. Schools must be able to ensure that all information submitted is documented and considered.

### **Is a medical report always necessary to determine 504 eligibility?**

The 504 Committee should attempt to obtain as much information as possible regarding the student's condition; a physician's statement is not required to determine eligibility. If the committee determines that a formal evaluation of any type is necessary, consent for the evaluation is required, and the evaluation must be provided at no cost to the parents.

### **Can a student be placed under Section 504 without parental consent?**

No. Parents must always be notified before their child is evaluated and/or placed under Section 504 (34 C.F.R. §104.36). If the committee determines the child is eligible under Section 504, parents are provided with a copy of their child's Section 504 accommodation plan.

### **What accommodations will a student receive if determined eligible under Section 504?**

Each child's needs are determined individually. Determination of what is appropriate for each child is based on the nature of the disabling condition and what that child needs to have an equal opportunity to compete when compared to the non-disabled. There is no guarantee of A's or B's or even that the student will not fail. Students are still expected to produce. The goal of education for all students, with or without disabilities, is to give students the knowledge and compensating skills they will need to function in life after graduation.

### **How often will a student with a 504 be re-evaluated?**

Students must be re-evaluated at least once every three years or whenever there will be a "significant change in placement." Your 504 Committee should re-evaluate your child's plan annually (every year) to ensure that their accommodation plan is appropriate based on their current schedule and individual needs. The accommodation plan may be revised during the school year if needed.

**Does every child who takes medication at school need a 504 Plan?**

No. Students may have accommodations such as medication administration without a formal plan. Local school system policy should be implemented.

**If a student has a 504 Plan, will a teacher or paraprofessional be assigned to come and work with the student?**

No additional personnel will be assigned to carry out accommodations in most circumstances. Section 504 accommodations are generally carried out by the teacher or other designated personnel. However, a student who cannot attend school may qualify for Hospital Homebound Services.

**Are there any special rules for PE?**

The 504 Committee should determine how much a student can participate in PE. The 504 Plan should address alternate assignments or exemptions.

**Is it possible for a 504 student to fail a class?**

Yes. 504 protections do not automatically dictate that a student will receive passing grades. The 504 Committee must determine if the accommodations were appropriate and if they were implemented for the student. Team members must remember that many factors influence a student's academic performance.

**How does eligibility for Section 504 affect discipline?**

Students may not be punished for behavior that is caused by a disability. If it is determined that the behavior was not related to the disability, the student could receive the same consequences as a student without a disability. In that case, a manifestation committee will convene for a disciplinary hearing for students with Section 504 plans. A Section 504 Notice of Conference and Section 504 Notice of Parents' Rights will be sent to notify the parent of the conference. The committee will review placement data to determine if current evaluation information is sufficient to decide. If placement occurred over a year ago, additional evaluation may be warranted. A Section 504 Parents' Rights will be provided at the conference, and the Manifestation Determination Conference Report will be completed. If the Section 504 Accommodations Plan is appropriate and there is no causal or substantial relationship, an expulsion process may continue.

**Can the 504 Committee order accommodations for district-wide standardized testing?**

As the testing manual outlines, accommodations can be recommended as part of a 504 Accommodations Plan. However, committees should exercise caution when making these decisions. 504 Plans should not be written solely to provide accommodations on standardized testing. A student may be disadvantaged if an accommodation is introduced while administering a standardized assessment.

**Can the 504 Committee order accommodations to the ACT/SAT?**

The 504 Committee can make recommendations based on accommodations written into the 504 Plan. However, the Educational Testing Service makes all decisions regarding accommodations individually.

**Can a student be dismissed from a 504?**

Yes. Students with no impairment are no longer eligible for 504 services. They will continue to be eligible for protection from discrimination based on their history of impairment.

**Can a parent/guardian or adult student age 18 or older revoke consent for 504 placement?**

Yes. A parent/guardian or adult student age 18 or older can revoke consent in writing. Please send your written revocation to the 504 Coordinator and/or homeroom teacher.

**Does 504 eligibility automatically guarantee that a student is chosen for extracurricular teams or activities?**

No. Students with disabilities must be given equal access to compete for and participate in these activities with reasonable accommodations. If the student fails to meet the team membership criteria, he is not considered "otherwise qualified." Discrimination occurs when the decision not to allow the student to participate is based solely on the fact that the student has a disability.

**What support does the school offer to disabled parents?**

Providing reasonable accommodations also applies to disabled parents. The school must provide reasonable accommodations to disabled parents so they can participate in mandatory educational activities for their child. Therefore, reasonable accommodations must be provided so the parent can actively participate in school-initiated conferences and hearings regarding the student's educational program related to academics and discipline.

# Hospital Homebound Services

*Colleen Hartmann, Hospital Homebound Supervisor*

Hospital Homebound (HHB) services are designed to provide continuity of educational services between the classroom and home or hospital for students in Georgia public schools whose medical needs, either physical or psychiatric, do not allow them to attend school for a limited period. HHB instruction may supplement the classroom program for students with health impairments whose conditions may interfere with regular school attendance (e.g., students receiving dialysis or radiation/chemotherapy or students with other serious health conditions). Students must be enrolled in a public school in Georgia to receive HHB services.

HHB services are not intended to supplant regular school services and are, by design, temporary. The student must anticipate being absent for at least ten consecutive or intermittent school days due to a medical or psychiatric condition. The student's inability to attend school for medical or psychiatric reasons must be certified by the licensed physician or licensed psychiatrist currently treating the student for the diagnosis presented. (Georgia Department of Education, 2016)

## **Standard Operating Procedures for STAFF Regarding Virtual HHB Services**

1. A parent/guardian or student contacts a GCA staff member to discuss the need for Virtual Hospital Homebound services due to circumstances leading to extended absence or a chronic qualified health condition.
2. The staff member completes the [Staff Referral for Student Support Survey](#) immediately.
3. The student must be anticipated to be absent from school for at least ten consecutive days or for intermittent periods anticipated to exceed ten school days during the school year. Chronic illnesses that require long-term intermittent absences may require students to miss many days, but not three consecutive days, will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
4. The Inquiry Specialist will review surveys and forward information to the Hospital Homebound Supervisor, whose team will follow up with the parent/guardian and provide the parent with a copy of the Hospital Homebound application when appropriate. The Hospital Homebound Team will request that the completed application be received back at least seven days before the start of HHB services. All paperwork from the parent/physician should be received within 20 business days. The phone call and/or email will be documented in the IC PLP contact log.

- *Virtual Hospital Homebound Application Packet*
    - Georgia Cyber Academy Initiation Letter
    - Parent/Guardian Notice and Summary of Virtual Hospital Homebound Services
    - Parent/Guardian Acknowledgement and Request for Virtual Hospital Homebound Services
    - HHB HIPAA Release Form
    - HHB Frequently Asked Questions
5. The parent/guardian receives the Virtual Hospital Homebound referral packet and reviews the information.
  6. The parent/guardian, emancipated minor, or student 18 years or older should take the HHB application to the licensed physician or psychiatrist treating the student for the medical condition. The completed application must be returned to the Hospital Homebound Supervisor. An incomplete application may cause a delay in services. Only signed paperwork will be accepted as an application for Hospital Homebound Services.
  7. The Licensed Physician/Psychiatrist Statement and Medical Referral Form should be legible and completed. The licensed physician/psychiatrist should specifically state the nature of the illness, the projected length of absence (anticipated to be absent for ten or more school days), and the fact that the student is physically unable to participate in virtual school. It should indicate how many hours or minutes a student is medically viable to participate in school. A signature from a licensed physician/psychiatrist is required.
  8. The Hospital Homebound Supervisor or Coordinator will review the referral for completion. If the application is complete, within five days of receiving it, the Hospital Homebound Supervisor or Coordinator should schedule an ESP meeting with the parent. If the application is incomplete, the Hospital Homebound Coordinator should email the parent within five school days, notifying the parent of the deficiencies.
  9. The Hospital Homebound Supervisor or Coordinator will review the application to ensure that the student meets the minimal eligibility requirements and will schedule a meeting with the appropriate team members.
  10. Students may ONLY be eligible for testing accommodations for district and state assessments if their Hospital Homebound packets are received within the last 30 days of school.

## **Hospital Homebound (HHB) Review Team**

### *General Education Students*

The team will develop an Educational Service Plan (ESP) and determine if a 504 plan is needed at the end of service.

- Hospital Homebound Supervisor
- Hospital Homebound Coordinator
- 504 School Level Coordinator
- Parent/Guardian

### *504 Program Students*

The team will develop an Educational Service Plan (ESP) with a 504 consideration meeting.

- Hospital Homebound Supervisor
- Hospital Homebound Coordinator
- 504 School Level Coordinator
- Parent/Guardian

### *Special Education Program Students*

Within five days, the team will schedule an amendment meeting and develop an Educational Service Plan (ESP) for each designated SE HHB student, which will be part of the student's IEP.

- Hospital Homebound Supervisor
- Hospital Homebound Coordinator
- Special Education LEA
- Parent/Guardian
- Special Education Case Manager
- General Education Teacher

## **Education Service Plan**

This plan must address the disabling condition, anticipated length of absence, accommodations and modifications recommended by the licensed physician or licensed psychiatrist, instructional delivery method, place of instruction, adult parent designee if the student is under 18 years of age, team members participating, and strategies for the student's reentry to school upon his or her return.

The plan does not need to be lengthy but must give all parties enough information to serve the student's needs adequately.

Georgia Cyber Academy can contact the doctor directly if the doctor does not address reentry on the medical referral form and a signed HIPAA release is on file. If

such information is not provided, the school team can develop the reentry plan without the doctor's input.

The ESP shall identify the number of hours necessary to meet the student's instructional needs. At least three hours of weekly instruction must be provided to comply with the Georgia State Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.31 Hospital/Homebound (HHB) Services and meet attendance requirements.

The ESP shall identify the appropriate course load for the student during the approved period of HHB instruction. Virtual HHB instruction is not structured to supplant the regular school day and may, therefore, limit the number and type of classes offered.

#### *Additional Notes*

- As described above, a team meeting must be convened to determine the needs of eligible students for Virtual Hospital Homebound Services.
- Students are not eligible for Virtual Hospital Homebound Services if their disease will endanger the health and safety of the instructor or other students with whom the instructor may come in contact. This would apply to in-person state testing.
- Students may receive HHB services for pregnancy if the pregnancy causes the student to meet the requirements for HHB services.
- Re-documentation of a chronic or recurring condition is not required but may be requested by the Hospital Homebound Supervisor.
- While receiving Virtual Hospital Homebound instruction, a student will be counted present for the week when a minimum of three hours of services are delivered within the week.
- Classroom teachers will provide recorded class sessions and assign students to appropriate reduced work in one of GCA's online learning programs.
- GCA Teachers provide class recordings where parents can utilize Virtual Hospital Homebound Services.
- In addition to the Virtual Hospital Homebound recorded class instructional sessions, a Learning Coach must be present during each recorded or live instructional class period.
- The parent will notify the Hospital Homebound Supervisor when the student is ready to return to school. A re-entry Hospital Homebound Review Team meeting will be scheduled with appropriate stakeholders to discuss student needs.
- For students who are anticipated to be out of school for ten or more school days due to accidents, surgery, etc., it is not necessary to wait until they have missed ten days to apply.



- To enroll a student in this program, a parent/guardian acknowledgment and request for virtual hospital homebound services form and a signed copy of the HIPAA Release form are required. The treating physician completes the last portion of the referral.

### **Termination of Services**

A student is released from the Hospital Homebound Services program:

- a. When determined by the Hospital Homebound Review Team. The Hospital Homebound Review Team should reconvene to consider whether HHB services are still needed upon any of the following events:
- b. When the student is employed in any capacity, goes on vacation, regularly participates in extracurricular activities, or is no longer confined to home.
- c. If the student misses the completion of work for three HHB instructional sessions without providing documentation of extenuating circumstances, including medical documentation from the treating provider,
- d. On the last day of school of the regular school year.
- e. If the student withdraws or is properly withdrawn from GCA.

# **Title III & English Learner Program**

*Emily Post, District ESOL Program Supervisor*

*Julie Ferrer, Federal Programs Director*

## **Purpose of English Learner Programs**

Georgia Cyber Academy will increase the English proficiency of English Learners (ELs) in the English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program and meet academic achievement standards for grade promotion by providing high-quality language development programs based on scientific research and demonstrating the effectiveness of English proficiency and achievement in academic content areas.

## **Federal Definition**

Means an individual:

- who is aged 3 through 21;
- who is enrolled or preparing to enroll in an elementary school or secondary school;
- who
  - was not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English;
  - is a Native American or Alaska Native, or a native resident of the outlying areas; and
  - comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual's level of English language proficiency or
  - is migratory, whose native language is a language other than English, and who comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; and
- whose difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be sufficient to deny the individual—
  - the ability to meet the State's proficient level of achievement on State assessments described in section 1111(b)(3);
  - the ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English or the opportunity to participate fully in society.

## **Common Acronyms**

English Learner (EL)

English Language Learner (ELL)

English as a Second Language (ESL)

Limited English Proficient (LEP)

English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

Emergent Bilingual (EB)

English Language Development (ELD)

Multilingual Learner (MLL)

*These acronyms describe a student who speaks a language(s) other than English and has been identified as needing additional language support.*

## **Standardized EL Entrance and Exit Procedures**

*per ESEA/ESSA Title III, Part A*

**Responsible for Monitoring:** The ESOL Program Supervisor is responsible for implementing the Entrance and Exit processes. The Federal Programs Director monitors the implementation of the Entrance and Exit processes.

Samples of the following are reviewed for internal monitoring:

- Evidence of timely screeners
- Home language surveys
- Coding in Infinite Campus
- Required Documentation in Infinite Campus

### **Registration/Enrollment Process**

Students will be identified through the enrollment process using the federally required Home Language Survey. This survey is provided in the language the guardians can understand, as indicated on enrollment paperwork. Home Language Surveys are kept in the students' records in Infinite Campus as part of their enrollment packet. The parent chooses the language of the online enrollment packet. The language in which the Home Language Survey is provided is determined by the family's answer to the preferred language question on enrollment forms.

The ESOL Program Supervisor reviews the enrollment data weekly with the Home Language Survey results. Any student whose answers are anything other than English will need to be investigated by phone calls to the family, SLDS data, and records requested from the previous school for more information.

Teachers will continuously review their student rosters in SLDS to verify any additional active, monitored, or former ELs.

The Compliance & State Reporting administrator routinely captures new students in GUIDE, providing the ESOL Program Supervisor with students coded as EL-Y, EL-1, EL-2, EL-3, EL-4, EL-Former, or EL-Waived. The ESOL Program Supervisor verifies previous years' ACCESS scores using the ACCESS for ELs Assessment History in SLDS. The ESOL Program Supervisor also contacts the students' previous schools to determine if they were reclassified from ESOL based on the sending district's exit score criteria.

When students enroll who have been determined to be EL – Served or EL– Monitored Year 1 and 2, the ESOL Programs Supervisor works with the enrollment team to request previous school ESOL records. These records are uploaded into Infinite Campus when they are received.

If a child transfers from a local school district or a sister WIDA state, contact will be made with that school to determine if the child was served, screened, or monitored in their EL program. This will help us determine if a child needs to take the WIDA Screener for placement.

For students new to U.S. schools, including Kindergarten students and recently arrived immigrants, the answer to any of the three state-required HLS questions indicates a language other than English, the student has a Primary Home Language Other Than English (PHLOTE) and is considered a potential English Learner must be administered the WIDA ELP screener. The online WIDA Screener placement test for second-semester 1st Grade through 12th Grade will be given in person by a certified teacher at the Georgia Cyber Academy office or a location local to the student. The WIDA Screener for Kindergarten placement test for Pre-K entering Kindergarten through first semester first graders will be given in person by a certified teacher at a location local to the student.

If the answer to all three questions is English, the student is not a potential English Learner and is not administered the WIDA screener. Transfer students' original HLS and prior EL documents take precedence in this process.

#### *Parent Communication Language Codes*

The Home Language Survey includes a question for Communication Preference. This question provides the district with the preferred language in which the parent prefers to be communicated to the extent practicable. The language preference is coded in Infinite Campus under the Parent's census information tab using Data Collection Language Codes provided by GaDOE. At GCA, parents who request a language other than English are called Limited English Proficient (LEP). The students of the LEP parent receive a flag in Infinite Campus that designates their parent or guardian as LEP. When hovering over the flag, staff members will see which language they are to communicate.

#### *When Parents Report a Multilingual–Multiliterate Home Language Environment*

GCA utilizes the updated HLS that includes "Additional Information from Multilingual Families." Parents who indicate their child and other adults in the home understand

and use English and another language will complete the “Additional Information from Multilingual Families” questions. If a parent responds that their child understands and uses English more than the other home language or that the child understands and uses both English and the other home language equally, GCA will not screen the child for English language proficiency. If the parent later requests that the student should be screened, an HLS amendment must be completed and uploaded to the student records in Infinite Campus.

If the student qualifies for EL status, GCA identifies the primary home language as the non-English language since both primary home languages cannot be simultaneously recorded in Infinite Campus.

If a parent of a developing multilingual child feels that the ELP screening process is discriminatory against multilingual-multiliterate families, the parent may request a Multilingual Home Language Survey (MLL HLS) Amendment. This amendment provides guidance and describes the process to change the student’s primary home language code to English. With English as the primary home language, the student would not be considered a potential English learner, nor would they be screened for ELP.

If a new family requests an MLL HLS Amendment form, the following process will occur:

- The ELD teacher will email the form provided by GADOE and offer a follow-up phone call to answer any questions at the guardian’s request
- Once the completed form is received, the ELD teacher will send it to the ESOL Program Supervisor.
- The ESOL Program Supervisor will review the form and follow up with the guardian if needed.
- Upon verification and approval by the ESOL Program Supervisor, this Multilingual HLS Amendment will be added to the student’s file in Infinite Campus and Ellevation and will constitute the official Home Language Survey of record.
- The ESOL Program Supervisor will also change the STUDENT HOME LANGUAGE in Infinite Campus to English.

#### *Students Transferring From Out-of-State*

If a student was screened by a WIDA state and not found eligible, GCA may NOT screen the student again. If the student was screened in a non-WIDA state and was not found eligible, GCA may consider rescreening the student using the WIDA

eligibility assessment. However, GCA will NOT consider re-screening if the student was screened within the last 24 months from enrollment, was successful in the general education program at the previous school, or performed at the met or exceeded level of the state's content assessments.

#### *J-1 Visa, Foreign Exchange Students*

It is expected that all J-1 exchange visitors are proficient enough in English to participate successfully in their exchange program and to function on a day-to-day basis in U.S. schools. GCA will not screen these students for language services if sponsors provide GCA with evidence of English proficiency in one of the following ways:

- Results of a recognized English language test
- Signed documentation from an academic institution or English language school
- A documented interview conducted by the sponsor

The ESOL Program Supervisor will review the evidence submitted on behalf of the student.

#### *Out-of-Country Enrollment Gaps*

When GCA runs a report of foreign-born students entering U.S. schools by date, a student with a break in enrollment of several months or a year of non-enrollment in U.S. schools would not be captured in this report. However, knowledge of a student's enrollment gaps will flag the student as an immigrant using the immigrant flag in their Infinite Campus, thus allowing the state to identify these students who still qualify as immigrants. Placement counselors will follow the grade level SOP for placement when there are enrollment gaps.

#### *When an EL-Y student is Incorrectly Identified*

On the rarest of occasions, a student is identified through the Home Language Survey (HLS) screened and found eligible for ESOL services, EL-Y, and following the parent notifies GCA that they incorrectly completed the Home Language Survey questions.

The ESOL Program Supervisor will provide the parent the opportunity to complete a Home Language Survey Addendum. The original HLS and the HLS addendum must be printed in a language the parents have indicated they understand.

### *Home Language Survey Addendum Procedures*

- When parents report an error in the completion of the Home Language Survey
  - A parent may request to change their answers to the Home Language Survey if they did not understand the questions on the original Home Language Survey.
  - The Home Language Survey Addendum will be provided to the parents in a language that they understand. The addendum must be completed and signed by the parent in the presence of a notary.
  - The notarized form must be added to the student's Person Documents folder in Infinite Campus.
  - The ESOL Program Supervisor will update the student's Primary Language code in Infinite Campus.
  - Depending on the change, a student may or may not be screened for ESOL eligibility.

The ESOL Program Supervisor approves the new HLS and will take the next steps based on the latest information.

If the next step requires a status change, GCA's State Reporting Manager will use the code EL-I to show the student was Incorrectly Identified for the remainder of the school year. For all subsequent years following July 1st, the student will be coded as EL-N. The ESOL Program Supervisor will place all documentation of the status change in the Person Documents file in Infinite Campus as well as report the following information to the GaDOE through the secure Portal messaging system by June 30th:

- Student's First and Last Name
- Grade Level
- Parent's reason for change
- Name of ESOL Program Supervisor that approved status change
- Former status code
- New Status code
- Date status change effective
- Save the report as DISTRICT.YEAR.TitleIII.EL-ICodeReport. Insert the link to the form.

### **EL Entrance Procedures**

#### *Screening for Eligibility*

WIDA Screener Placement Tests are the state-required screening tests for potential EL students. The WIDA Screener for Kindergarten will be used for Pre-K entering



Kindergarten, first/second-semester Kindergarten, and 1st semester first graders. Students in the second semester of 1st grade through 12th grade will take the WIDA Screener for their appropriate grade level. Students from another county or from WIDA sister states who have already been screened will not have to take this. Retired screeners (K-WAPT, remote, etc.) are no longer used to determine initial eligibility. GCA general funds pay for costs associated with administering the screeners, including the price of the screeners, facility fees, mileage, and lodging costs.

The following protocols are followed to determine which grade-level screeners and/or domains are given based on grade level, semester, and grade-level cluster.

### Domains (Kindergarten and First Grade)

#### Grade Level Cluster

ESOL-certified teachers will be trained through the WIDA platform to give this placement assessment and will assist in screening. All administrators/examiners will renew their WIDA test certification annually after September 1st for the current school year. WIDA's Test Certification Year runs September 1st - August 30th. The ESOL Supervisor will maintain the annual training certificates for each examiner.

The WIDA Screeners, including the Kindergarten Assessment, are secure assessments and must comply with all requirements for test security. The Kindergarten WIDA Screener and other printed WIDA Screener materials remain locked in the testing closet at the GCA office, along with other secured testing materials. When a screener is needed, the ESOL Services Supervisor will assign a certified examiner the materials and place them in a locked banker's box. The materials must remain under the supervision of the certified staff member at all times until returned to the Testing Closet. The costs of ELP screeners will be funded using our general funds budget.

The WIDA Screeners will be administered to all students enrolled at the beginning of the school year within 30 days. After those first 30 days, the ESOL team will screen students within ten days of enrollment.

Early Screening is not offered at Georgia Cyber Academy, as the school does not have a pre-kindergarten program. Screening begins once students have started kindergarten.

#### *EL Eligibility Criteria*

A Pre-K student entering Kindergarten through first-semester Kindergarten with a Composite Oral Proficiency Level (Listening & Speaking) < 5.0 on the Kindergarten

WIDA Screener qualifies and is identified as an English Learner. If the student's Composite Oral Proficiency Level (Listening & Speaking) is  $\geq 5.0$ , the student Does Not Qualify (DNQ) as an English Learner and is not coded as an English Learner. The screener score is uploaded to the student's Person Documents folder within Infinite Campus.

A 2nd Semester Kindergarten student and first Semester First grader whose Overall Composite Proficiency Level (Listening, Speaking, Reading, & Writing) is  $< 5.0$  on the Kindergarten WIDA Screener qualifies and is identified as an English Learner. If the student's Overall Composite Proficiency Level (Listening, Speaking, Reading, & Writing) is  $\geq 5.0$ , the student Does Not Qualify (DNQ) as an English Learner and is not coded as an English Learner. The screener score is uploaded to the student's Person Documents folder within Infinite Campus.

A second-semester First Grader to 12th Grader taking the WIDA screener whose grade-level-adjusted Overall Composite Proficiency Level (Listening, Speaking, Reading, & Writing) is  $< 5.0$  is eligible for ESOL services. If the student's grade-level-adjusted Overall Composite Proficiency Level (Listening, Speaking, Reading, & Writing) is  $\geq 5.0$ , the student Does Not Qualify (DNQ) as an English Learner and is not coded as an English Learner. The screener score is uploaded to the student's Person Documents folder within Infinite Campus.

### *EL Entrance Flowcharts*

#### [Kindergarten WIDA Screener for Kindergarten](#) [Grades 1-12 WIDA Screener](#)

### *Documenting ELP Screening Irregularities*

An ELP Screening irregularity may happen when one of the following takes place to a student:

- Administered the incorrect grade-level screener
- Administered the incorrect language domain subtests
- Administered the screener by a non-WIDA certified or untrained staff
- Administered the WIDA screener without appropriate accommodations to a student with or suspected disabilities
- Administered the WIDA screener even though they are English-only
- Administered the WIDA screener after transferring with an EL Exit status (EI-1-F)

On the occasion of an ELP Screening irregularity, the ESOL Services Supervisor will complete the ELP Screener Irregularity Form and maintain it locally. The next steps for properly identifying the student's EL status must be discussed between the ESOL Services Supervisor and the WIDA Screener examiner.

#### *Students with Disabilities*

Potential English Learners with Disabilities (or Suspected Disabilities) Students with disabilities established in an IEP or 504 Plan whose home or primary language is not English must be administered the appropriate WIDA ELP Screener with the appropriate accommodations established in the IEP. Please see the GaDOE [2024–2025 Student Assessment Handbook](#). These accommodations must be documented in the IEP within Infinite Campus. Collaboration will occur between ESOL and the Special Education department to ensure the accommodations on the ELP Screener are appropriate to the disability. See also the WIDA Table of Allowable Accommodations in the GaDOE 2023–2024 Accessibility and Accommodations Manual and in WIDA's 2023–2024 WIDA Accessibility and Accommodations Supplement. A potential EL entering school with a suspected disability may require an evaluation for special education before administering the WIDA ELP Screener with accommodations, especially if the suspected disability would impact the screener's results. Making an eligibility determination for EL status when there is a suspected disability that has not been addressed could impact the eligibility determination. Collaboration between the ESOL and Special Education departments will take place before the administration of the WIDA ELP Screener.

#### *Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities*

The WIDA Screener and the WIDA Screener for Kindergarten may not be valid screeners for Potential English Learners with Disabilities. A team meeting will determine if the language screener would adequately assess a student with a significant cognitive disability or non-verbal communication. The team will include the parent, an ELD teacher, the classroom teacher, a special educator, and a school administrator. The team will discuss the best educational options for the student.

If the IEP team determines that the administration of the WIDA ELP Screener with accommodations is not appropriate to identify this student as an EL, the IEP meeting minutes suffice as documentation of this decision. A flag could be placed with the Home Language Survey in the permanent record to alert any reviewer to see the IEP minutes dated XXXX for a screening decision.

If the IEP team determines that the student is not an English learner, then he/she would be coded EL=No.

The meeting minutes and the committee decision must be maintained in the student's Person Documents (cumulative record) folder in Infinite Campus. Additionally, the IEP team's decision must be maintained in the student's cumulative record, along with evidence that supports it. The decision may be revisited at any time in the student's school career.

#### *Students with Disabilities that Preclude Assessment of One or More Language Domains*

WIDA ELP screeners may not be valid for making EL eligibility determinations for students whose IEP precludes the assessment of one or more language domains. To determine the student's qualifications as an EL, the IEP team must meet to discuss how the student will be determined to be an EL when one or more language domains are missing.

Students who are deaf, blind, and non-verbal would be considered as having a disability that precludes one or more language domains. In this case, the Assessment Director must seek counsel from the GaDOE Assessment Division, who will then consult with the Special Education and EL Learner Programs.

The decisions made by the IEP team must be maintained in the student's cumulative record in Infinite Campus.

#### **Coding Screener Data & Results**

To code student EL-Y on the EL Information Tab in Infinite Campus (IC), you must change the student's Program Status to EL. The date of the ELP Screener is called the Identified Date in IC. In order to add the EL Program status, a home language other than English must be added to the student's demographic information (Census-People).

#### *Screener Results*

The ESOL Program Supervisor will email the parents the ELP Screener score to the parent email on file in Infinite Campus. A follow-up phone call will also be offered to discuss the results. A copy of the score report will be placed in the records folder in Infinite Campus and ELlevation.

Georgia Cyber Academy utilizes the EL Screener Tab in SLDS to maintain the ELP Screener information for all districts in Georgia to access as needed.

### **Documenting ESOL Services**

When a student begins service, the ESOL Program Supervisor will add an initial date for ESOL services in the student's individual record in Infinite Campus. If the student begins receiving services but after parent notification (see below) is withdrawn from services, the start date should be indicated as parent withdrawn and the date the school received written parent notification. A start date for ELs receiving ESOL must be documented annually. Finally, a start date is entered, indicating when the student began to receive ESOL services. The start date should be the first day the student received instruction in an ESOL program. It is not allowable to simply enter the first day of school if the student did not receive ESOL services on the first day of school. This service will be documented in Infinite Campus (IC) under Program Participation, English Learners, and will be marked as service type ESOL: ESOL and ESOL:1 ESOL Segment. ESOL Placement must occur within 30 days from the first day of school (10 days for students entering after the first day of school.)

Once identified as an EL student, the ESOL Program Supervisor will email the counselor assigned to student placement. The ELD teachers will be copied on the email. The counselor will place the EL student in the ESOL Course in Infinite Campus.

Active EL students will be assigned to a certified ELD teacher who will meet with them for 45- 50 minutes daily (depending on grade level) to monitor progress and provide academic support using various service models. The ELD teacher will focus on assisting the student in achieving proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing in English.

Grades K-3 = 45-minute daily segments or a minimum of 225 minutes weekly  
Grades 4-8 = 50-minute daily segments or a minimum of 250 minutes weekly  
Grades 9-12 = 90-minute daily segments or a minimum of 450 minutes weekly: The secondary grade band's bell schedule at GCA allows for 90-minute segments five days per week

### **Parent Notification of ESOL Services**

The Parent Notification Letter is used to notify parents of students who have been identified as EL and their student's placement in a language instruction program. The parent notification letter is emailed annually to all EL Eligible students' parents. The letter must be provided to the parent no later than 30 days from the beginning of the

school year or within two weeks of enrollment in an ESOL program. For any student that enrolls after the first 30 days of the school year, the school will have ten days or two weeks to notify of ESOL program placement following the student's enrollment date. Parents of newly identified students will receive the Initial Eligibility Parent Letter that notes the student's WIDA screener score and program delivery model. The letters will come from Ellevation and be translated into the Native Language for those who request communication in their native language. After the letters are sent to the parents, they will be uploaded to Infinite Campus in the student's permanent record.

The school will ensure that all communication to a parent of a child identified for participation in a language instruction educational program for limited English proficient children shall be in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, provided in a language that the parents can understand.

The school must notify parents in a language they can understand within ten school days. GCA will use ZAB Translation Solutions to translate documents. Additionally, GCA will refer to the Georgia DOE website or Ellevation for completed translations of required forms.

#### *Parent Notification of Title I Supplemental Language Programs*

The Parent Notification of Title I Supplemental Language Programs form is sent within 30 days from the beginning of the school year or within ten days of placement in the ESOL program. Parent Notification of Title I supplemental Language Programs is not for all ESOL Students. This notification is for students receiving additional language programs funded by Title I or III Federal Programs. When applicable, the ESOL Program Supervisor will use the template provided by the GADOE website. It is the duty of the ESOL Program Supervisor to update the notification with the supplemental program information. The English Language Development teachers will disperse the notifications via email in an understandable language and format. A copy of the notification will be added to the student's permanent record. This form also provides an opportunity for the parent of the EL to waive the student's participation in the program. The ESOL Program Supervisor may use the combined Parent Notification of Student Eligibility for EL and Federally Funded Language Programs form provided by the GaDOE website.

The ESOL Program Supervisor monitors to confirm that all students eligible for Title III or Title I funded language programs receive the notification. A spreadsheet is maintained, and the teachers check when the notification has been sent and

uploaded to Infinite Campus. Additionally, the Federal Programs Director spot-checks during ongoing internal monitoring.

#### *Staff Notifications of EL Status Placement*

After the ESOL Program Supervisor codes a student in IC for ESOL services, she notifies the ISS Operations Administrator that a student needs placement in an ESOL segment. The ISS Operations Administrator is responsible for assigning the student to their ESOL segment in Infinite Campus. The ESOL teacher is copied on entrance and exit communications to the parents and tracks student rosters. The EL flag in Infinite Campus notifies all staff that a student is eligible for ESOL services. Weekly K-12 data reports are available to all teachers and staff who participate in special programs, including ESOL, for each student on their roster.

#### *Parent Notification of Student Eligibility for English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Language Program and Supplemental Language Instruction Services*

If GCA is not Consolidating Funds: The ESOL Program Supervisor may choose to use the combined Parent Notification of Student Eligibility for English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Language Program and Supplemental Language Instruction Services instead of sending the letters separately if the school is no longer consolidating Title I funds.

#### *Notification of Language Assistance Services*

Schools must notify Limited English Proficient (LEP) parents and all school staff of the availability of free (to them) language assistance services for information about school programs and activities (e.g., online/digital and “in person” or telephone-based orientation sessions, parent-teacher conferences, meetings with school staff, special education or other meetings about disability, learning coach activities, etc. ). The notification(s) should include information about how to access the services. It will identify a school contact person (e.g., Family Partnership School Coordinator of Special Programs) who can assist LEP parents in accessing interpreter services or translated documents.

GCA has a Family Partnership School Coordinator of Special Programs dedicated to working with district and school-level staff to ensure communications are being sent in a language that can be understood. GCA will routinely use S’mores newsletters to allow for on-demand translations. The GCA website is translatable through a translation management tool, Weglot. The availability of Language Assistance Services will be published in/on:

- the Georgia Cyber Academy’s website;

- the student and parent handbooks;
- all District-wide or school-based newsletters or other general communications;
- general contact information in advertisements or other contacts relating to enrollment/admissions through taglines
- GCA's letterhead that includes taglines

Annually, school staff are trained on the following items:

- Notice of Language Assistance Services for Parents
- Accessing an interpreter
- Requesting document translation
- Utilizing free online translation

In general, the use of family members and friends for the provision of language assistance is not acceptable. Using such individuals may raise issues of confidentiality, privacy, or conflict of interest, and, in many circumstances, such persons are not competent to provide quality, accurate interpretations.

In addition, staff are strongly cautioned not to rely on family members and friends to provide LEP parents meaningful access to important programs and activities. That, even when LEP parents have voluntarily chosen to provide their own interpreter or translator, the school may still need, depending upon the circumstances of the encounter, to provide its own interpreter or translator to ensure accurate interpretation or translation of critical information. This is especially true for, but not limited to, situations where the competency of the LEP parents' chosen interpreter is not established and/or when identified, LEP parents do not request a translation, but a translator is deemed necessary to convey information.

Additionally, the use of minor children raises concerns about competency, quality, and accuracy of interpretations, and it is never advisable to use such children to convey information about their own education and/or complex information.

#### *Data Collections*

The ESOL Services Supervisor will collaborate with the SIS Assistant Director to monitor correct coding for data collection purposes. The SIS Assistant Director, along with other GCA Operations department staff members, will annually attend the GaDOE's Data Collections Conference for up-to-date information on coding English Learners. The ESOL Program Supervisor collaborates with the SIS Assistant Director to relieve data collection errors.



## English Learner Exit Criteria

### WIDA ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 English Language Proficiency Assessment

Under ESSA, all students identified as EL, including waived, will be administered the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 English Language Proficiency (ELP) assessment annually; the ACCESS test will be given annually in February.

The Federal Programs Director monitors the ELL ACCESS Participation Rates annually. Georgia Cyber Academy will comply with the 95% testing participation requirement but will aim for 100%. If the participation rate falls below 95%, the Federal Programs Director will create a Corrective Action Plan through collaboration with the ESOL Services Supervisor, Assessment Manager, and the Accountability Director.

Attending the ACCESS test is the student's attendance for that school day. Not showing up for the ACCESS is an unexcused absence. Students who do not attend their assigned ACCESS date will be rescheduled within the ACCESS testing window at least two additional times. Each day missed will count as an unexcused absence.

#### *Exit Criteria*

Georgia Cyber Academy will provide services to EL students until they are proficient enough in English to participate meaningfully in the regular education program. The school will determine whether a student requires ESOL service based on various measures. If the combined evidence suggests that an EL no longer needs direct service and has achieved on the Annual Assessment, the student may be exited from direct ESOL service. Exit and Reclassification is based on the following criteria:

- ACCESS Score Requirement for a Kindergartener to exit ESOL: The Overall Composite Proficiency Level (CPL) is  $\geq 5.0$ . GCA will use the [EL Exit Flowchart for Kindergarten](#) to make exit decisions.
- If a student in grades 1-12 achieves an Overall score of greater than or equal to 5.0, the student must be exited from the ESOL program. GCA will use the [Grades 1-12 EL Exit Flowchart](#).

Alternate ACCESS Threshold for considering EL Exit: Alternate ACCESS Overall CPT P2 (Emerging) for two consecutive years with IEP Team recommendation OR any other Alternate ACCESS Overall CPL of the SAME score for Three consecutive years with IEP recommendation.

The student no longer needs English language development services or a TPC, including but not limited to specific interventions based on the four domains (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) based on multiple indicators, including:

- WIDA Screener for Kindergarten or WIDA Screener Placement Tests, grades K and 1-12
- ACCESS test
- Work Sampling
- Grades
- Homework and teacher/parent input

EL-1 and EL-2 students need to be closely monitored to ensure that they progress in all classes, show growth, and meet benchmark assessment standards. ELD teachers will be required to send a Monitoring Form through ELlevation to be completed by content teachers and the ELD teacher for these students at the end of each grading period (quarterly.) These forms will be generated and housed within Ellevation.

The student now has full access to the mainstream curriculum with or without using universal tools (Assistive technology) available to all students.

Once the two-year monitoring period has ended, the student's coding for Data Collections Student Record purposes will change from EL-2 to EL-3 (3rd Year Post-Exit) and then EL-4 (4th Year Post-Exit). Following the EL-4 designation, the student will be coded EL-F (Former EL) and remain as such as long as they are enrolled in public schools.

Annually, parents will be notified of the exit and reclassification criteria for EL students.

### *EL Reclassification*

Reclassification is a term that is used when an EL student's English language proficiency level reaches the state and LEA's definition of English proficiency. Georgia Cyber Academy has chosen the score of 4.6-4.9 on the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 to be considered for EL Reclassification for 1st to 5th grade students. Georgia Cyber Academy has chosen the score of 4.5-4.9 on the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 to be considered for EL Reclassification for 6th to 12th grade students. These scores will be reevaluated annually in compliance with the state form.

Any student who achieves a 4.6-4.9 (1st-2nd), 4.5-4.9 (3rd-8th), and 4.4-4.9 (9th-12th) on the annual English Language proficiency assessment will be reviewed

for reclassification based on the flexibility of the state of Georgia. A reclassification meeting will be held, and the state's reclassification form must be filled out. The team will include the ELD teacher, the ESOL Program Supervisor, a content teacher, and the parent/guardian. If the team decides the student will successfully access the curriculum at grade level without ESOL direct support based on the academic and perception data collected, the student may exit.

After completing the Reclassification Meeting, students exit from EL status, and the student's status is reclassified from English Learner=Yes (EL-Y) to English Learner Monitor Year 1 (EL-1). The Reclassification Meeting document is required to be added to the student's Person Documents folder within Infinite Campus.

#### *Post-Exit Reversal-Reclassification Decisions*

During the Post-Exit years 1 & 2, the EL-1 & EL-2 students are monitored quarterly by the content teachers of these students. The ELD teachers for the assigned grade band will send the monitoring form to the teachers and document and track student progress. Through monitoring, if an EL-1 or EL-2 student is not progressing as expected and monitoring suggests a persistent language need, GCA will re-test the student's English language proficiency with a valid, reliable, and grade-appropriate ELP test to see if the student must be offered additional language assistance services.

The Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), ELD teacher, and ESOL Program Supervisor will collaborate to decide if the EL-exited student is struggling due to a lack of English Proficiency. The team will decide if the EL-exited student should be administered a valid English Language Proficiency (ELP) test to determine if additional language support services must be offered. The WIDA ELP assessment is not an option for exited ELs at GCA.

Through monitoring, if an EL-1 or EL-2 student is not progressing academically, monitoring suggests a persistent language need, and was exited below 5.0, may be placed back into the ESOL Program without a Reclassification meeting. GCA will maintain best practices by meeting with the parent/guardian, ELD teacher, ESOL Program Supervisor, and the content teacher to determine if the student is struggling due to a language barrier. Notes and decisions from the meeting will be maintained in the student's record in Infinite Campus and ELlevation.

The ESOL Program Supervisor needs to reflect on why the EL-exited student did not succeed without ESOL services.

- Is the GCA exit score flexibility too low for students to be successful in their grade-level content classes?
- Are the instructional staff at GCA providing instructional support to the student?
- Are the instructional staff mindful of the Testing Participation Committee document and following through with the accommodations that have been made?

In Georgia, it is the responsibility of the MTSS team to determine whether the EL-exited student is struggling because of a lack of content knowledge or whether the EL-exited student is struggling because of a lack of English language proficiency. ELD teachers are essential to the MTSS review process as they understand the process and timeframe of second language acquisition, especially those ELD teachers who have taught the exited EL in recent years. The team may administer a valid ELP assessment from among vendor choices. However, the WIDA ELP assessment is not an option for an exited EL student.

First, the team should examine whether its locally chosen exit criteria ensure that EL students are proficient enough in English to be successful in the classroom. If GCA finds that changes to locally designed exit criteria are necessary, appropriate training will be provided to teachers and staff.

Secondly, the team should ensure that the struggling student receives all instructional support available to all students within the school.

The third step is to ensure that the team is aware of the student's lack of academic progress and success. The MTSS team should examine student data and determine appropriate interventions or increases in the intensity and duration of such interventions, following MTSS protocols. Tier 2 or 3 progress monitoring processes should be implemented as for any other student.

#### *Questions for the MTSS Team to Consider*

- Was the exited student educated formally in his/her home country? Was schooling consistent, or did the student's education have prolonged periods of interrupted or no schooling?
- What were the exited student ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 scores and subscores in each domain?
- Based on the English Learner Reclassification Review Committee decision, was the student exited from English language assistance services?

- What were the student's EOG/EOC scores?
- In the courses in which the student is struggling, what is the main area of struggle?

The team reviewing all the evidence and data will determine whether the problem is truly a lack of English language proficiency or a lack of content knowledge, cognitive issues, or stability.

#### *Receiving Exited EL Students from Transfer LEAs*

GCA honors the decision of Reclassification for a student who transfers from another LEA when the transfer occurs after the October FTE count.

If the transferring LEA uses a lower EL Exit Criterion than GCA, and if the transfer occurs within the first two weeks of school, GCA will observe the student's performance for two weeks and convene another EL Reclassification Team to review the documentation and evidence when applicable.

#### *Post-Exit Re-Screening Decision-Making Process for EL-3 and EL-4 Students Returning to US Schools after Multiple Years in Non-English School*

Students who leave the country and are in non-English school environments have their EL status frozen where they last left in a US Public School. When returning to US schools, the student continues with the EL status they last had. If the Exited EL-3 or EL-4 student is not progressing academically and monitoring suggests a persistent language need, the ESOL Supervisor, a grade band ESOL teacher, an MTSS team member, and one of the student's content teachers will meet to determine if the student should be considered for re-screening.

The following must be considered before moving forward with a screening:

- Did the student demonstrate full English proficiency at an early elementary grade level?
- Following EL Exit, was the student successful in U. S. school during the first two monitoring years (EL-1 & EL-2) and then left the country to be schooled in a non-English environment for three or more years?
- Is the student currently enrolled in a grade level with high academic English expectations? Is there a sense of urgency that suggests re-screening and possibly being served in the ESOL Program?

Based on the findings from the above questions, the student may be administered the ELP Screener again. The screener's results will determine the next steps.

#### Post Re-Screening Steps:

- Documentation of the decision-making process and the ELP screener results will be maintained in the student's Person Documents folder in Infinite Campus. A cover letter will be saved as the first page of the screener document describing the purpose of the re-screening.
- If the screening results show that the student is eligible for ESOL services, the student will be coded as EL-Yes in IC. The ESOL Supervisor will need to work with the GaDOE ESOL office and GCA's Data Collections Assistant Director to correct data collection errors.
- The parent/guardian must receive notification of ESOL services within ten days of placement.
- The ESOL teacher will collaborate to create a TPC and EL Plan for the student within ten days of entering ESOL services.
- If the reclassification occurs before or during the ACCESS window, the student must also take the ACCESS test.

#### *Exiting Procedures for English Learner Students with Disabilities*

The Alternate ACCESS for ELLs assessment for English Language Proficiency is used for Georgia Students in grades 1-12 who are classified as English learners and have significant cognitive disabilities that prevent meaningful participation in the regular ACCESS for ELLs assessment. These students must be eligible to participate in GAA 2.0.

Students taking the Alternate ACCESS who score CPL P2 (Emerging) for two consecutive years with the IEP recommendation OR any other Alternate ACCESS Overall CPL—The same score—for three consecutive years with the recommendation of the IEP team may be considered for EL Reclassification. The EL Reclassification/IEP Team Rubric will be used to decide. A copy of the rubric will be placed in the student's permanent record in Infinite Campus.

#### *Post-Exit Procedures for Students with Disabilities*

For two consecutive school years, the exited student's progress toward IEP goals must be monitored by designated ESOL and Special Education staff to ensure the exited student's English Proficiency is not a barrier to full access and participation in classroom instruction and assessments in English. Quarterly monitoring documents will be placed in the student's permanent record in Infinite Campus and housed in Ellevation.

*Exiting Procedures for English Learner Students with Less than Four Domains*  
As determined by the student's IEP team or 504 plan, if a student's disability is directly related to a domain for which there are no accommodations, the student may be exempt from taking that language domain assessment.

Students who are deaf, blind, and nonverbal would be considered to have a disability that precludes the assessment in one or more language domains. For these unique situations, the Assessment Director needs to seek counsel from the GaDOE Assessment Division, which would consult the Special Education and EL Learner Programs.

Students whose disabilities preclude assessment of one or more language domains should be considered for exit from English Learner Status when the student has met the following state-established criteria using a GaDOE-provided Designate Composite Proficiency Level (D-CPL)

- D-CPL Process:
  - Administer the appropriate WIDA ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 or Alternate ACCESS language domain tests to the EL student as established by the IEP team.
  - For each language domain test not administered, the testing coordinator must mark DO NOT SCORE with a reason code of SPD in the students' test booklet or WIDA AMS.
  - Using WIDA-provided language domain scale score tables, the GaDOE Assessment & Accountability Division assigns the lowest exit score for the missing language domain(s) to allow an overall composite proficiency level calculation.
  - The GaDOE Assessment & Accountability Division will calculate a designated composite Proficiency Level (D-CPL) for each one of these EL students whose WIDA ACCESS score results are missing one or more language domains.
  - Typically, in August, the GaDOE Assessment & Accountability Division provides GCA with an ACCESS D-CPL for each one of these EL students.

Based on the D-CPL and the statewide EL exit criteria for ACCESS for ELs 2.0 or Alternate ACCESS for considering EL Exit would then be applied to decide to Exit the EL student from ESOL services.

### *EL Exit Reason*

The reason for the EL exit must be coded in Infinite Campus. This describes the method used to determine the student's placement in the monitoring phase. The EL Exit is required when EL status is '1' or '2.'

The ESOL Services Supervisor will choose the appropriate reason code:

- 1: ACCESS or EL proficiency
- 3: Exited out of State or from a non-public school
- 4. EL Reclassification Team Decision

### *Reporting Date of EL Exit*

ELs who have either met the standardized statewide Exit criteria or have been reclassified must have an EL Exit date coded in Infinite Campus. The EL Exit data must be on an end-of-year date, June 30th. GCA typically uses June 30th as an exit date. However, this date cannot be added to IC until AFTER July 1st.

- The first-year post-exit starts July 1st after the student has met a qualifying exit score and/or Reclassification decision at the end of a school year or June 30.
- During the two-year monitoring period, exited ELs are coded as EL-1 and EL-2 for Year 1 and Year 2.
- Once the two-year monitoring period has ended, the student's coding for Data Collections Student Record purposes will change from EL-2 to EL-3 (3rd Year Post-Exit) and EL4 (4th year Post-Exit).
- Following the EL-4 designation, the student will be coded EL-F (Former EL).

### *Timeline for EL Exit Procedures*

- May
  - GCA's ESOL Program Supervisor pulls ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS scores from DRC.
  - The ESOL Program Supervisor and ELD teachers review scores for students that would meet the state's ACCESS exit criteria.
  - The ESOL Program Supervisor and ELD teachers review scores for students who may be "considered for exit" if they score between CPL 4.6-4.9 (1st-5th) and CPL 4.5-4.9 (6th-12th).
  - ELD Teachers will schedule and hold Reclassification meetings, including students' content teachers, the ESOL Program Supervisor, a Parent or guardian, and additional staff related to the student's qualifications (504, IEP, Gifted, etc.). Final decisions may be made



before the end of the school year or within the first 30 days of the following school year.

- The ELD teacher will notify parents if their student has exited in the parent's preferred language.
- July/August
  - The exited EL students' code has been changed in Infinite Campus.

## Services and Programs of Instruction for ELs

Instructional programs for ELs shall include formal instruction in English language development and instruction in academic subjects, which is designed to provide ELs with access to the regular curriculum. In selecting a program(s), the school shall choose research-based programs that have been demonstrated to be effective in the education of ELs. ESOL delivery models will also be determined based on student’s proficiency levels and research-based guidance. During the 2024-2025 Academic Year, the following delivery models are utilized:

- Grades K - 8: Scheduled ESOL Class
- Grades 9-12: ELA Push In (American Literature and World Literature), Sheltered Ninth Grade Literature Course, and/or the ESOL Elective (Communication Skills I)

Programs shall be implemented consistently to prompt the acquisition of full English proficiency. Programs shall include instruction in academic subjects that is equivalent in scope to the instruction that is provided to students who are not limited in English proficiency. ESOL Class sizes and daily segments are consistent with the state requirement, except for weekly minutes for grades 6 - 12. The SCSC grants the maximum flexibility allowed by law to the Charter School (Georgia Cyber Academy). LEAs waiving this rule or O.C.G.A. § 20-2-156 may have been granted flexibility regarding classroom instructional time.

Grade Levels	Daily Minutes Per Segment	Daily ESOL Segments Maximum	Weekly Minutes Minimum
K-3	45 minutes	1	225
4-8	50 minutes	2	250
9-12	55 minutes	5	275
Block Schedule	90 minutes	2	225
Hybrid Block Schedules	If less than 90 minutes	1	Determined by LEAs

Grade Levels	Funding Class Size	Maximum Average Class Size	
		No Paraprofessional	With Paraprofessional
K-3	7	11	13
4-8	7	14	15
9-12	7	18	20

Instruction shall be delivered by individuals who meet Department of Education licensure and certification requirements and who are trained in teaching ELs. According to the ESOL State Board Rule 160-4-5-.02, ESOL teachers must hold a clear teaching certificate and “shall hold necessary and appropriate ESOL endorsement or ESOL certification issued by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.” The [OCR Obligations for Professionally Qualified Staff](#) are followed when hiring ESOL Teachers. The [PSC provisional certificate guidelines](#) are followed when a provisional ESOL endorsement is needed.

ESOL classes will be scheduled so that ESOL supports and classes do not interfere with a student’s content classes. ESOL classes will be offered during class periods when students do not already have a content class. Students in these classes are grouped based on their English Language Proficiency. ESOL classes follow a pass/fail grading policy. Content classes follow the student-to-teacher ratios shown below.

Grade Level	Board Policy	Class Max Students	Co-Taught Max Students
Kindergarten	50	25	
1st Grade	50	25	
2nd Grade	60	25	
3rd Grade	75	37	
4th Grade	100	50	25
5th Grade	100	50	25
6th Grade	150	50	37
7th Grade	150	50	37
8th Grade	150	50	37

Course	Caseload Max Students
9th Grade Lit	150
American Lit	150
Other ELA	200
Algebra I	150
Geometry	150
Other Math	200
Physical Science	150
Biology	150
Other Science	200
Foreign Language	200
Electives	250

The student’s parent, guardian, or Relative Caregiver has a right to refuse placement of their child(ren) in the ESOL program and has the right to withdraw an identified student from the program. Parents, guardians, or Relative Caregivers of eligible students who refuse placement of their student in either program or withdraw students from it shall do so in writing. Parents, guardians, or Relative Caregivers cannot refuse annual ACCESS testing.

*ACCESS & Accommodations Conference*

According to state and federal guidelines, each EL student will participate in ACCESS testing. The purpose of this test is to assess growth in English acquisition and determine eligibility for the upcoming year.

ACCESS test results will be sent to families through a password-protected email. A copy of the scores will be available to the ELD teacher and the student’s teachers via the EL Plan in Ellevation. ACCESS test score reports will be placed in the student’s Person Documents folder in Infinite Campus.

At the beginning of each school year or the initial placement of an EL, the ELD teacher, the student's ELA teacher, and the ESOL district supervisor will discuss accommodations and classroom modifications for ESOL students. The EL plan/TPC document will be provided to all teachers who will sign that they have received ACCESS scores and required accommodations for each student in their class.

The ELD teachers will:

After enrollment closes, parents will be sent their student's EL plan/TPC. The EL Plan/TPC will be explained to families during the October English Learner Family Night. The following are explained during English Learner Family Night and in the ESOL Family Newsletter (ESOL Explorer).

- Defines what it means to be an English Learner.
- Explains the goals of the ESOL program and the support provided.
- Shows parents where to find the accommodations and classroom modifications on the EL Plan/TPC.
- Explains what different accommodations can look like and what their purpose is
- Reviews the notification of ESOL services that outlines the instructional models GCA uses

#### *State Assessment Accommodations*

For state assessment purposes, ESOL services, EL-1, & EL-2 students needing accommodations to access their education at the same level as their age and grade-level peers will be noted on the TPC (Testing Participation Committee)/ form and the EL Plan. Accommodations needed for state assessments must follow these guidelines:

- All accommodations on the TPC/EL-Plan must be implemented throughout the school year.
- Only state-approved accommodations can be used with EL students on state assessments.
- Refer to [GADOE's Assessment page](#) for an updated list of approved accommodations.

Following the completion of state assessments, score reports will be communicated to families in their preferred language.

#### *Data and Information Required by the Department of Education*

Georgia Cyber Academy shall enter such data and information concerning ELs as instructed by the Department of Education and as otherwise required annually.

For Student Record reporting, the coding status for ELs who have met the criteria for exiting language assistance services and will begin the two-year monitoring period changes from EL-Y to EL-1 or EL-1 to EL-2. To document their first—or second-year monitoring status, ELs are coded in the Student Record as EL-1 for the first year and EL-2 for the second year. For state testing purposes, students will be marked EL-3 three years after exiting and EL-4 after four years of exiting.

EL-3 and EL-4 students will not be monitored as EL-Year 1 and 2 students are but will be identified to monitor scoring on state tests. At the end of the monitoring cycle, the student will be coded as a former EL (EL-F) five years after exiting. As ACCESS scores generally are received and evaluated before the end of the school year, GCA will determine that an EL has successfully met the criteria for exit from the ESOL program. Coding in Infinite Campus must not be changed for students before July 1. The student's EL coding should remain until all state data collection has been completed and finalized.

#### *Waived Students*

Screening for ESOL is not an option. It is a requirement of Title III and the Office of Civil Rights. However, once a child is screened and if that child is found eligible, the parents may waive the child's right to participate in the program. Parents may waive students from the EL program, but the child will still be required to take the ACCESS annually. If a family insists they do not want their child screened for ESOL and refuses to meet to take the screening test, we must refer them to GCA's Accountability Department.

If a parent wishes to waive services, the ELD teacher will attempt to call the parent (with an interpreter if needed) to review the student's current English Proficiency scores and their standing in academic classes to ensure an informed decision is made. A follow-up email with the waiver attached will be sent to the parent. If the parent cannot be reached, the attempt will be documented in Infinite Campus, and a follow-up email will be sent requesting a meeting. The EL student will continue being provided with ESOL services until the meeting is held, and a final decision will be made on waiving. If needed, the meeting will be held with an interpreter based on the parent's preferred language.

A plan will be put in place to address supporting the language proficiency needs of the student in class.

If the parents decide to waive ESOL services, a waiver form in their preferred language will be sent to them. Once this form is signed, the ELD teacher will add it to the Person Documents folder in IC and forward it to the ESOL Program Supervisor.

The ESOL Program Supervisor ends the EL-Services date in Infinite Campus. The Service type changes to Non-ESOL01-Parent refusal-indirect serv. A parent declined date needs to be added to the Active EL Record.

The ESOL Program Supervisor will then email a copy of the Explanation of Consequences for Refusing English Learner Services to the parents.

Waived students will be monitored quarterly and provided with a TPC for appropriate modifications and accommodations. Before the student can be waived from ESOL services, the waiver must be signed and initiated by the parent annually.

#### *Communication with Parents*

GCA will use translating options through the published school website and newsletters to communicate with families in their native language. Teachers and staff can request an interpreter for meetings and phone calls to the Limited English Proficient (LEP) Learning Coach/Parent. GaDOE documents translated to Native Languages will be utilized as necessary. The school handbook is written as text on the website and, therefore, is translatable using the embedded translation features.

The ESOL team may host events for EL and LEP families yearly. Teachers from foreign language departments/clubs are encouraged to attend to help with translations.

GCA Staff will make every effort to translate communication to families in their native language

- Documents containing sensitive or legal information (TPC, IEP, Report cards, etc.) will be formally translated using Zab Translation services.
- GCA Letterhead will include taglines for families to request language assistance services
- School newsletters will be sent using on-demand translation tools
- The GCA website uses a translation management tool, Weglot
- Certified Languages International is the interpreter service GCA uses for meetings and conversations with parents
- GCA continues to hire bilingual staff across departments to provide in-house translation services.

### *Student EL Files*

Every student identified as EL must have a Person Documents file in Infinite Campus. The following items must be located within this file:

- Home language survey (retained for all students)
- Placement and Annual Assessment results
- Copy of the most recent TPC
- Copy of the Annual Notification of Continued Services
- Progress monitoring assessment or documentation (same interval as report cards)
- If the parent refuses services, a copy of the document indicating such
- Title I Supplemental Funds form
- Exit from ESOL or Reclassification documents

### *Retention of EL Students*

Retention of an EL student should not be based solely upon their English language proficiency level. Prior to considering retention, the following points will be addressed in a meeting composed of the student's teacher(s), ESOL staff member(s), and administrator(s). Documentation and results of the meeting must be kept in the student's cumulative folder.

The committee should consider the length of time a student has been enrolled in the school to determine whether retention is an appropriate choice.

The student's parent(s)/guardian(s) should be contacted when a student is not performing at grade level. All communication should be documented and in the parent(s)/guardian(s) native language. Documentation may include phone calls, progress reports, report cards, sample work, retention warning letters, etc.

Every EL student must have a TPC (Testing Participation Committee) or localized form for documenting modifications and scaffolds. Teachers are required to have copies of TPCs for any student who has one, and all modifications and scaffolds must be followed. It is important to ensure that the TPC has been fully implemented and documentation has been provided for any changes or updates made to the TPC. The TPC is a fluid document that should be revisited and updated as new data becomes available, but not less than once per school year.

An EL student should receive English language development instruction throughout the school day via pull-out, push-in, or an ESOL course to support their language development.

Multiple types of data points must be collected to show that an EL student consistently fails to meet grade-level expectations on screening and progress monitoring instruments. Retention decisions for EL students should not be based on one specific piece of data.

Parents/guardians may appeal the decision to retain, and a meeting will be held to discuss the appeal with the guardian, ESOL Program Supervisor, and school-level administration.

#### *English Language Learners with Additional Services*

The ESOL Program Supervisor and ESOL teachers collaborate with the MTSS and Gifted departments to determine student eligibility for these programs. Multiple data points are considered to determine whether students should be served in MTSS or Gifted programs.

#### *English Language Learners with Disabilities*

The IEP Team for a student identified as an EL with disabilities must include persons with expertise in second language acquisition and other professionals, such as speech-language pathologists, who understand how to differentiate between limited English proficiency and a disability. The participation of these individuals on the IEP Team is essential to developing appropriate academic and functional goals for the child and providing specially designed instruction and the necessary related services to meet these goals. The ELD teacher must be present at the annual IEP meetings, determination meetings, and amendments (when applicable) hosted by the special education case manager. GCA provides [guidance](#) for these meetings.

A student identified as EL with a disability will receive English Language support and special education services. Sometimes, a student's special education needs are so great that they would be better provided with language development opportunities in a self-contained classroom. When this is determined by the IEP team, it will be included in the IEP, and the ELD teacher will work with the Special Education teacher to provide language learning opportunities. These students will be coded as NonESOL02: Lang Supp in SPED for ESOL services in Infinite Campus.

#### *ELs with Disabilities taking ACCESS*

IDEA requires each school to ensure that a free appropriate public education (FAPE) is made available to all eligible children with disabilities residing in the State in mandatory age ranges, beginning at age three and possibly lasting to a child's 22nd



birthday, depending on State law or practice (34 CFR §§300.101–300.102). These entities also must ensure that the IDEA’s rights and protections are extended to eligible children and their parents (34 CFR §§300.100 and 300.201). IDEA requires that all students with disabilities be included in all general State assessment programs, including assessments described under section 1111 of the ESEA, with appropriate accommodations and alternate assessments, if necessary, as indicated in their respective IEPs (section 612(a)(16)(A) of the IDEA, 34 CFR §300.160(a), and section 1111(b) of the ESEA).

Both Titles I and III of the ESEA require schools to annually assess the English proficiency of all ELs in the State enrolled in public schools in grades kindergarten through twelve in the domains of speaking, listening, reading, and writing (sections 1111(b)(7) and 1123(b)(3)(D) of the ESEA). Accordingly, as part of a general State assessment program, all ELs with disabilities must participate in the annual State ELP assessment with or without appropriate accommodations or by taking an alternate assessment, if necessary, consistent with their IEPs.

ELs with disabilities can participate in the annual State EL assessment in the following ways, as determined by their respective IEP Teams:

- in the regular State ELP assessment without accommodations (in the same way as ELs without disabilities take the assessment);
- in the regular State ELP assessment through the use of one or more appropriate accommodations as indicated in the student’s IEP or
- in an alternate assessment aligned to state ELP standards if the IEP Team determines that the student cannot participate in the regular State ELP assessment, with or without appropriate accommodations. These students must also qualify to take GAA 2.0.

#### *The Role of the Teacher and Teacher Training*

Before administering the language screenings, the ELD teachers and ESOL Program Supervisor will complete the annual WIDA Screener training (Paper & Pencil, Online, & Kindergarten).

Georgia-certified staff, also certified in ESOL, will be asked to assist with administering paper and pencil for the ACCESS test.

Georgia Certified staff may be asked to assist with the online administration of the ACCESS test.

Teachers and staff assigned to administer the ACCESS test will complete the annual WIDA ACCESS training through the WIDA platform and sign the Non-Disclosure. The WIDA ACCESS training must be completed annually after September 1st for the current school year. The WIDA Screener Certification is valid for one calendar year from the completion of the training.

A monthly ESOL program meeting will be held to review program guidelines, plan for upcoming events, inform and update on current tasks, and discuss any concerns. This meeting is for ELD teachers and the ESOL Program Supervisor.

GCA will have five full-time certified ELD teachers serving the K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12. Each year, the ELD teachers will support students through the push-in model, innovative model, or separate class determined by the Instructional Support Services (ISS) Team.

All ELD teachers will be able to assist staff with questions and/or concerns and stay in constant communication with the ESOL Program Supervisor.

All ELD teachers must administer the WIDA Screener for Kindergarten or WIDA Screener to potential EL students.

Active EL students will meet with a certified ELD teacher for the minimum weekly segments as required by the DOE to monitor progress and review academic topics. This will include activities in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Classes are held in the CLASS synchronous platform, attendance is taken, and classes are recorded. Grades K-3 = 45-minute daily segments or a minimum of 225 minutes weekly, Grades 4-12 = 50-minute daily segments or 250 minutes weekly.

#### *WIDA ELD Framework:*

During the 2023-2024 Academic Year, all instructional staff were trained on utilizing the WIDA ELD Framework in their content area. This is a part of the WIDA ELD Framework rollout plan.

### **Title IIIA Budget Planning & Monitoring**

The Comprehensive Needs Assessment drives the annual school improvement plan (CLIP) interventions. The Title IIIA Funded Language Instruction Education Program Activities are planned, budgeted, implemented, and monitored by the Federal Programs Director and the ESOL Program Supervisor. The Federal Programs Director and ESOL Program Supervisor will review the implementation and effectiveness of

Title IIIA-funded initiatives monthly. ELD teachers will report their implementation through monthly conferences with the ESOL team.

The effectiveness of programs will be determined based on the goals in place for district and school improvement, as well as other goals in place for specific program implementation, as outlined in the Consolidated LEA Improvement Plan. Data to be considered will be ACCESS scores & student growth percentiles, exit rates, EL student academic achievement through GMAS, NWEA MAP, Interim Assessments, class pass rates, attendance, withdrawal rates, and perception surveys. Additionally, data on special populations, including SLIFE, LTEL, & EL/SWD, will be analyzed to determine the additional strengths and challenges of the initiatives.

#### *Title IIIA Funded Language Instruction Educational Program (LIEP) Activities*

The current Title IIIA supplemental programs and available instructional resources are listed below:

- Lexia English
- Continental Newcomers
- Lexia Core5
- Little Sponges
- Physical copies of Books (Novel Studies & Bilingual Dictionaries)
- Explicit Vocabulary Cartoons
- Imagine Learning Edgenuity

#### *Title IIIA Funded EL-Focused Professional Development (PD) Activities*

Title IIIA Funded EL-Focused Professional Development activities at GCA are ongoing and presented in many models. GCA staff (including non-ESOL teachers, principals, and other school leaders, administrators, and other school or community-based organizational personnel) participate in professional development opportunities that are designed to improve the instruction and assessment of English learners, enhance the ability of teachers, principals, and other school leaders to understand and implement curricula, assessment practices and measures and instructional strategies for English learners, increase ELs' English language proficiency or substantially increasing the subject matter knowledge, teaching knowledge and teaching skills of their teachers; and is of sufficient intensity and duration which does not include one-day workshops and conferences to have a positive and lasting impact on the teachers' performance in the classroom.

Title III Part EL-Focused Professional Development includes:

- Two all-staff virtual training sessions
- Grade band PLCs lead by the ESOL Program Supervisor

- An optional Professional Learning Track for staff and administration working with English Learners
- An optional Book Study for Science Teachers of ELs - Teaching Science to English Learners
- WIDA National and GaTESOL Conferences for ESOL Teachers

#### *Title IIIA-funded Program Parent, Family, and Community Activities*

GCA provides and implements activities and strategies that enhance or supplement language instruction educational programs for English learners. Parent, family, and community engagement activities serve to coordinate and align related programs, such as Title IA EL parent engagement and outreach programs.

Title IIIA-funded Parent, Family, and Community Outreach Activities include:

- Title III split-funded Parent School Partnership Coordinator that supports parent engagement activities through collaboration with the ESOL Program Supervisor
- Adult Literacy Classes for LEP Parents of English Learners

#### *Annual ESOL Program Review*

The effectiveness of the ESOL program will be reviewed annually through the Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA), a component of the Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP), in coordination with the school's other federal programs. Data is pulled from the ACCESS tests, CCRPI's progress toward English Proficiency, and Closing the Gaps to assess our program's effectiveness. The data shows our strengths and weaknesses as a program and allows us to make improvements for the following school year.

#### *Family Resources*

Information on the GCA website will be available for EL families to utilize. In addition to this, here are some websites that you may share with your EL families:

- [Colorin Colorado](#)
- [Everything ESL](#)
- [ESL Printables](#)
- [Using English](#)
- [Starfall](#)
- [ESL Boggles World](#)
- [ESL Lab](#)

# Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support

*Lakin Whitesides, PBIS Coordinator*

## Program Summary

The section provides information about the function and purpose of PBIS.

### Georgia Department of Education

According to the GADOE, Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is an evidence-based, data-driven framework proven to reduce disciplinary incidents, increase a school's sense of safety, and support improved academic outcomes. Implementation of PBIS is saving countless instructional hours otherwise lost to discipline. The premise of PBIS is that continual teaching, combined with acknowledgment or feedback of positive student behavior, will reduce unnecessary discipline and promote a climate of greater productivity, safety, and learning. PBIS schools apply a multi-tiered approach to prevention, using disciplinary data and principles of behavior analysis to develop school-wide, targeted, and individualized interventions and supports to improve school climate for all students. (OSEP Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports).

### Overview

*Source: Center on PBIS*

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is an evidence-based, three-tiered framework for improving and integrating all the data, systems, and practices affecting student outcomes daily. PBIS creates schools where all students succeed.

**Tier 1:** Tier 1 practices and systems establish a foundation of regular, proactive support while preventing unwanted behaviors. Schools provide this universal support to all students, school-wide.

**Tier 2:** Tier 2 practices and systems support students at risk for developing more serious problem behaviors before those behaviors start. These supports help students develop the skills they need to benefit from core school programs.

Tier 3: At Tier 3, students receive more intensive, individualized support to improve their behavioral and academic outcomes. Schools rely on formal assessments to determine a student's need at this level.

### **Summary**

Georgia Cyber Academy has established developmentally appropriate behavior expectations for each grade band through the SOAR matrix. Through SOAR, safe, on task, awesome attitude, and responsible, students are taught positive behavior strategies and expectations. When teachers model the expectations and implement the PBIS strategies, students soar as learners with fewer behaviors interrupting valuable class time.

Georgia Cyber Academy uses PBIS Rewards as an acknowledgment system. The purpose of an acknowledgment system is to prompt staff to respond positively when a student engages in behavioral expectations. Reinforcing students' appropriate behavior increases the likelihood that it will happen again and allows staff to connect with more students.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **PBIS Coordinator**

The PBIS Coordinator is a highly qualified, state-certified educator responsible for maintaining PBIS processes and procedures in an online environment. The PBIS Coordinator supports and guides district staff and helps manage the learning process by focusing on all students' needs. Coordinators monitor student progress through various platforms and work closely with School Level Discipline Assistant Principals, PBIS Team Members, teachers, students, and parents/Learning Coaches to advance each student's success in the virtual classroom. Duties include but are not limited to participating in regional, statewide, and national training for PBIS, securing resources for PBIS planning and implementation, overseeing the school's PBIS assessment and SWIS accounts, implementing an acknowledgment system, and managing grade band PBIS teams.

### **Discipline Grade Band Administrator**

The Discipline Grade Band Administrator is a highly qualified, state-certified educator responsible for creating an environment conducive to successful PBIS implementation. Duties include but are not limited to attending PBIS grade band meetings, completing and collecting data required for PBIS school evaluation and reports (TFI, SAS, EOY reports, etc.), leading in carrying out the grade band's action

plan, and reporting back to the grade band the PBIS data and work the team is completing.

### Coach

The Coach is a highly qualified, state-certified educator who supports the gradeband team. Duties include but are not limited to ensuring the team is meeting regularly, establishing a meeting agenda, creating grade band-specific PBIS lessons, and ensuring that all the Critical Elements of PBIS are being implemented with fidelity for the grade band.

### Behavior Representative

The Behavior Representative is a highly qualified, state-certified educator responsible for having a basic understanding of behavior's functions. Duties include, but are not limited to, working closely with the Discipline Grade Band Administrator, ensuring a focus on the root cause of behavior, ensuring that the team is focused on proactive strategies, and ensuring the team is using evidence-based strategies and interventions.

### Grade Band Administrator

The Grade Band Administrator is a highly qualified, state-certified educator responsible for creating an environment conducive to successful PBIS implementation. Duties include, but are not limited to, supporting the grade band through the ISS department, being an active team member who supports and facilitates PBIS team activities and recommendations, and helping with support for Tier 2 and Tier 3.

### Data Leader

The Data Leader is a highly qualified, state-certified educator responsible for leading the PBIS Leadership Team through the data and problem-solving processes. Duties include but are not limited to analyzing data and leading data discussions to formulate problem-solving for PBIS team meetings, ensuring accuracy and consistency of SWIS data entry, and pulling data from CLASS and PBIS Rewards for the team to analyze.

### Family Engagement

The Family Engagement member is a highly qualified, state-certified educator responsible for supporting, implementing, and leading PBIS in the grade band. Duties include but are not limited to attending grade band PBIS monthly meetings,

participating in the PBIS action planning process and completing assigned tasks, communicating with families about PBIS implementation and use of the framework throughout the grade band, working with FELs for information distribution, and set positive tone and lead by example.

### Teacher Engagement

The Teacher Engagement member is a highly qualified, state-certified educator responsible for actively supporting, implementing, and leading PBIS in the grade band. Duties include but are not limited to attending grade band PBIS monthly meetings, participating in the PBIS action planning process and completing assigned tasks, communicating with staff about PBIS implementation and the use of the framework throughout the grade band, mentoring teachers who need PBIS implementation help, and setting a positive tone and leading by example.

### Committee Members

The Committee Member is a highly qualified, state-certified educator responsible for actively supporting, implementing, and leading PBIS in the grade band. Duties include but are not limited to attending grade band PBIS monthly meetings, participating in the PBIS action planning process and completing assigned tasks, communicating with students, families, and staff about PBIS implementation and use of the framework throughout the grade band, and setting a positive tone and leading by example.



## **Frequently Asked Questions about PBIS**

### **What do students and educators gain in PBIS schools?**

All students develop and learn social, emotional, and behavioral competence, supporting their academic engagement. All educators develop positive, predictable, and safe environments that promote strong interpersonal relationships with students through teaching, modeling, and encouragement.

### **How does PBIS contribute to the development of a positive school climate, school safety, and student-educator relationships?**

PBIS implementation involves explicitly prompting, modeling, practicing, and encouraging positive expected social skills across settings and individuals. When students are taught to use social skills for themselves and with others, school climates are described as more positive, learning environments are designated as safer, and student-educator relationships are referred to as more trusting and respectful.

### **What does PBIS have to do with school discipline and classroom management?**

Effective classroom management and preventive school discipline support teaching and learning. PBIS further emphasizes that classroom management and preventive school discipline must be integrated and work together with effective academic instruction in a positive and safe school climate to maximize student success.

### **How does PBIS work in a virtual environment?**

Teachers can still establish expectations for students in a virtual classroom. PBIS is successful in a virtual environment through establishing virtual classroom expectations, providing students with positive behavioral feedback, creating an accountability system, reinforcing expectations, and providing behavior interventions as necessary.

# Bibliography and Resources

## ***Bibliography***

**Georgia Department of Department of Education**

**Child Find Procedures**

**FAPE**

**NWEA/MAP Growth**

[Georgia Department of Education, Hospital Homebound \(HHB\) Services Guidelines Understood, 504 Plan Terms to Know](#)

[U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, Protecting Students with Disabilities](#)

## ***Resources***

[National Center on Intensive Intervention Tools Chart](#)

[What Works Clearinghouse](#)

[Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports](#)

[NEA Positive Behavioral Interventions](#)

[U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, Parent and Educator Resource Guide to Section 504 in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools](#)

# Appendices

## **GCA Forms**

[Georgia Cyber Academy Medical Form](#)

## **MTSS Forms**

[Parental Rights](#)

[Parent Request for Special Education Notice \(PRSN\) Response Letter](#)

[Visual Example of Form 3300](#)

[PGB SST Form](#)

[EGB SST Form](#)

[MGB SST Form](#)

[SGB SST Form](#)

## **504 Forms**

[College Board Consent Form](#)

[Diabetes Health Management Plan](#)

[ACT Consent Form](#)

[Vocational Rehabilitation Forms](#)

## **ESOL Forms**

[Parent Waiver of Direct ESOL Services](#)

[Multilingual Home Language Survey \(HLS\) Amendment](#)

[Home Language Survey Addendum](#)