

# District Curriculum Accommodation Plan DCAP

**Westford Public Schools**

23 Depot Road

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Westford, MA 01886

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## WESTFORD MISSION & VISION

Westford Public Schools values the development of curious, lifelong learners who are responsible, empathetic members of the community, demonstrating innovation through a wide variety of opportunities within inclusive, joyful learning environments that embrace their variability and honor their diversity.

Westford believes in preparing our students for active, positive participation as both local and global citizens by developing and fostering creativity, communication, collaboration, and critical thinking.

## CORE VALUES

As an entire district, we embrace the **SPiRiT** core values initially developed by our six elementary schools:

- Safety:** physical, mental, and emotional well-being
- Perseverance:** fostering resilience and growth mindsets
- Inclusion:** committing to equity for all
- Respect:** both of ourselves and those around us
- Integrity:** in our work, in our actions, in our choices
- Teamwork:** collaborating with others toward a common goal

## MASSACHUSETTS, GENERAL LAWS, CHAPTER 71, SECTION 38Q1/2

A school district shall adopt and implement a curriculum accommodation plan to assist principals in ensuring that all efforts have been made to meet students' needs in regular education. The plan shall be designed to assist the regular classroom teacher in analyzing and accommodating diverse learning styles of all children in the regular classroom and in providing appropriate services and support within the regular education program including, but not limited to, direct and systematic instruction in reading and provision of services to address the needs of children whose behavior may interfere with learning or who do not qualify for special education services under chapter 71B. The curriculum accommodation plan shall include provisions encouraging teacher mentoring and collaboration and parental involvement.

## UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING (UDL)

[UDL](#) is an educational framework that promotes the creation of adaptable learning environments and instructional methods that cater to the diverse needs of all learners

The core idea behind UDL is to proactively address potential barriers in curriculum design, making learning more accessible from the outset rather than adding accommodations later. It emphasizes flexibility in how information is presented (representation), how students engage with the material (engagement), and how they demonstrate their learning (action and expression).

UDL is not a one-size-fits-all approach but rather a flexible framework to guide the design of learning experiences that work for the widest range of learners. It encourages educators to anticipate and address learner variability from the beginning, ultimately leading to more equitable and effective educational opportunities for everyone

### **EARLY LITERACY PROTOCOLS**

All students in grades K-5 participate in DIBELS 8, a universal literacy screening assessment, three times a year, as required by Massachusetts regulation 603 CMR 28.03(1)(f).

- Beginning of the year: Mid-September
- Middle of the year: Mid-to-late January
- End of year: Late May to early June


If a student's DIBELS scores indicate they are "at risk" or "at some risk," Literacy teams discuss their eligibility for intervention support. Parents and caregivers are informed of eligibility within 30 days of the assessment.

Students identified as "at risk" or "at some risk" based on their DIBELS scores are also continuously progress monitored to track growth and ensure appropriate and timely instruction. Parents and caregivers will receive updates on student progress during parent-teacher conferences. Additional individualized information on students' screening and/or progress monitoring scores are available with the student's classroom teacher, Literacy Specialist and/or Principal.

### **MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORT (MTSS)**

According to the [DESE Blueprint](#) for Multi-tiered Support, the problem-solving process in MTSS is an ongoing methodology for effective decision-making at all levels of the system and across all three tiers (Council of the Great City Schools, 2012). The tiers in this model represent instruction and support. Within the MTSS model, universal supports such as high-quality, universally designed, culturally sustaining, and evidence-based curriculum, instruction, and assessments are provided for all students. Movement among the three tiers is fluid and is not determined or defined by specific designations, such as diagnosed disabilities. Rather, movement is supported by data from universal screeners, diagnostic assessments, progress monitoring, and how a student responds to one level of intervention. Any and all students should have access to support when they need them. In addition, obtaining services at one point does not mean that students will always need that level of support. The MTSS process is not always linear but rather oriented around problem-solving. When data suggests that students require more or less intensive support to aid either remediation or enrichment, they will move throughout the tiers based on that need. No student should be labeled by an intervention tier. For example, a child is not a "tier 2 student" but rather a student requiring tier 2 support in a specific skill/content area(s). In addition, when a student receives interventions in tier 2, it


should not replace tier 1 support. These supports build upon one another. Moreover, students can move fluidly through tier 1, 2, and 3 supports as needed. For example, if data suggests that students are not meeting the standards, what additional support may they need? Similarly, if students significantly exceed the standards, what tier 2 supports may be necessary to optimize challenge and promote growth? It's also important to note that students may need tier 2 support in one area (e.g., math standards) but may need only tier 1 support in another area (e.g., relationship-building).



The diagram shows a stylized building with a green roof and a dark blue base. The base is labeled "TIER 1 Universal Support" in yellow and white text. A red double-headed arrow points between the base and the roof, indicating a bidirectional relationship between the universal support and the overall educational environment.

### Tier 1

These are supports available to **all students** through a general education program. Inclusive practice, which is linguistically responsive and culturally sustaining, is a cornerstone of tier 1. Inclusive practice is defined as “instructional and behavioral strategies that improve academic and social emotional outcomes for all students, with and without disabilities, in general education settings” (Educator Effectiveness Guidebook for Inclusive Practice, 2017). For example, providing students with a high-quality, coherent curriculum that provides options and choices for how they learn (i.e, access to books, videos, or direct-teacher instruction), what materials, scaffolds and supports they need to learn (i.e., visuals, exemplars, graphic organizers, rubrics, etc.), and how they can express what they have learned will allow more students to access rigorous, standards-based instruction.



The diagram shows a stylized building with a green roof and a dark blue base. The base is labeled "TIER 2 Targeted Support" in yellow and white text. A red double-headed arrow points between the base and the roof, indicating a bidirectional relationship between the targeted support and the overall educational environment.

### Tier 2

Tier 2 supports occur in addition to the supports that are provided in tier 1 settings. These supports are generally done in **small groups** and include additional opportunities to practice the skills necessary for core instruction or strategies for enrichment.



### Tier 3

Tier 3 provides more intensive support. These are often explicit, focused interventions that occur **individually** or in **very small groups**. It is important to note that tier 3 is not synonymous with special education. Students with disabilities may not need tier 3 support and students not identified with a disability may in fact need tier 3 supports.

### DISTRICT CURRICULUM ACCOMMODATION PLAN (DCAP)

The DCAP serves as a framework for how a school district supports diverse learners within the general education classroom by providing teachers with strategies, resources, and encouraging collaboration and parental engagement.

#### Purpose of the DCAP:

- To assist general education teachers in analyzing, assessing, and accommodating diverse learners
- To increase support services and instructional delivery options available within general education settings, as defined herein
- To recommend instructional interventions for struggling learners
- To delineate resources available to teachers in the areas of student support, mentoring, professional development, and coaching

Accommodations are ways to assist students in accessing the curriculum more effectively. Accommodations are provided within the general education classroom and may be available to any/all students. Such changes are made to provide a student with equal access to learning along with an equal opportunity to be able to show what they know or can do. Accommodations do **NOT** change the instructional level or content, delivery of instruction or performance criteria.

All staff may provide individual accommodations to students on an as-needed basis and specific to the content or situation. While the DCAP lists best practices, sample strategies, and other actions educators may select for appropriate accommodations for individual students, in no way does the DCAP limit the accommodations a staff member may implement to meet a student's needs.

The following list of [accommodations](#) highlights possibilities for teachers to use within their classroom instruction. Please note that the recommended list of accommodations support many focus areas; therefore you will see accommodations multiple times as they cross over the various academic and social/emotional areas. The list is not intended to be an exhaustive, but rather a starting point for teachers as they consider how to best reach and teach all students.

<b>ATTENTION REGULATION &amp; EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING</b>
<p><b>Attention Regulation</b> refers to a student's ability to selectively focus their conscious thought on relevant information, sustain that focus, and resist distractions in their environment. <b>Executive Functioning</b> is an umbrella term for a set of higher-level cognitive processes that enable goal-directed behavior, problem-solving, and adaptation to new situations. Strong executive functioning skills are fundamental for planning assignments, organizing materials, managing time, initiating and completing tasks, self-monitoring progress, and regulating emotions during learning.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Access to concentration tools (e.g. fidget tools, flexible seating, noise cancelling headphones, quiet workspace, timers)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Access to organizational tools (e.g. graphic organizer, story map, visual checklist of steps)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Access to self-monitoring tools (e.g. revision/editing checklist)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Allow access to sensory tools, grounding activities (mazes, dot to dots) to help regulate emotions</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Allow additional time and/or assistance for organization/packing at start and end of each day</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Allow extra time for written output for in class assignments</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Allow the student to take the assessment in a separate setting</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ask the student to repeat directions in their own words</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Break down long term assignments with interim due dates and check-ins</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Clarify abstract or figurative language, such as metaphors, idioms and puns, within instructional moments</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Clearly state and revisit a purpose for the lesson focusing on language and content to maximize student opportunities to participate.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Create a “safe place” for the student to go to manage frustration and/or stress that meets their needs</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Encourage the student to use strategies to manage frustration and/or stress (e.g. using mindfulness, relaxation, and self-calming strategies)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Establish check in and check out with trusted adult</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Focus on demonstration of understanding of concepts and/or skills, rather than visual neatness when appropriate</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Following instruction, summarize key points with concise language (eg. paraphrase or</li> </ul>

bullet points)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Give directions and information in small chunks at a time</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Give multiple models and exemplars (achievable at different levels)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Have the student highlight or underline keywords in the directions and/or in questions</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Identify and/or emphasize key information and vocabulary</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Implement a home-school communication log</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Implement and monitor individualized organization systems (e.g. binders, folders, materials, electronic calendars, agenda planners)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Include movement breaks, energizers, and/or sensory breaks during instruction when possible</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Make expectations and goals for lessons and activities clear for students</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Post homework in consistent location and bring attention to it during each class providing opportunities for students to record their homework</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Preview/cue expectations, transitions, and changes to the schedule</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide “wait time” or “think time” for responding to questions or formulating discussion thoughts</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide a copy of teacher or peer notes, skeletal notes, study guides, and/or reference guides</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide a graphic organizer to assist with organization of writing, notes, output, etc.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide context and/or background knowledge to support lesson objectives</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide exemplars for expected final product of assignment</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide frequent checks for lesson and assignment comprehension</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide manipulatives when possible</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide multimodal presentation of instruction and materials (ie. combination of visual, written, verbal)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide opportunities for peer mediation and restorative practices to support conflict resolution</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide options for completion of assignments digitally or using paper and pencil when possible</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide selective seating based on the student’s need (ie. front of class, back of class, near instruction, away from distractions)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide sentence frames/starters for written or oral expression</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide skeleton note handouts to minimize copying demands from board in the classroom</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide structured choices for a student when they are struggling to meet expectations</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide student an alternate opportunity to demonstrate understanding when appropriate</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide student opportunity to verbally explain thinking when posed a short answer or open response question</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide task initiation supports (e.g. brainstorming, visual models/exemplars, set short-term goals/deadlines)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide the student with a subtle or nonverbal communication system to express emotional states during their school day</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide the student with natural breaks, such as water fountain or walk, as needed</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide verbal and non-verbal prompts before calling on students</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide verbal and/or visual cues to redirect attention to the task</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide word banks to support retrieval</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Read, repeat, and/or clarify directions out loud as needed</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reduce amount of written/visual information on page/screen/slide</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Schedule check-ins with students throughout the day as needed</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Scribe for student when needed as a means to assess student understanding</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Slow the rate of verbal directions/presentations</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Thoughtful selection when creating students' groups/partnerships</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● When addressing non-compliant behavior, limit verbal responses and directions</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● When possible, provide choices of equal value for successful task completion</li> </ul>

## **SOCIAL SKILLS**

**Social skills** refer to the abilities that allow students to effectively interact, communicate, and build relationships with others in various contexts. This encompasses both verbal and non-verbal cues, including communication, cooperation, empathy, conflict resolution, manners and etiquette and active listening. Developing strong social skills is crucial for academic success, healthy relationships, and navigating the complexities of school and life.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Clarify abstract or figurative language, such as metaphors, idioms and puns, within instructional moments</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Create a “safe place” for the student to go to manage frustration and/or stress that meets their needs</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Encourage the student to use strategies to manage frustration and/or stress (e.g. using mindfulness, relaxation, and self-calming strategies)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Establish check in and check out with trusted adult</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Implement a home-school communication log</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Include movement breaks, energizers, and/or sensory breaks during instruction when possible</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Model using sentence frames for social situations. (e.g. I don't like when you, I wish you would.)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide "wait time" or "think time" for responding to questions or formulating discussion thoughts</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide opportunities for peer mediation and restorative practices to support conflict resolution</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide options to respond using non-verbal communication</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide sentence frames/starters for written or oral expression</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide social facilitation and coaching as needed</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide verbal and non-verbal prompts before calling on students</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Schedule check-ins with students throughout the day as needed</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Thoughtful selection when creating students' groups/partnerships</li> </ul>

## EMOTIONAL REGULATION

**Emotional regulation** refers to a student's ability to understand, manage, and respond to their own emotions in healthy and adaptive ways. This involves: identifying emotions, understanding emotional triggers, modulating emotional responses, and coping strategies. Developing emotional regulation skills is essential for students to maintain focus, build positive relationships, navigate challenges, and engage effectively in the learning environment.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Clarify abstract or figurative language, such as metaphors, idioms and puns, within instructional moments</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Create a "safe place" for the student to go to manage frustration and/or stress that meets their needs</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Encourage the student to use strategies to manage frustration and/or stress (e.g. using mindfulness, relaxation, and self-calming strategies)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Establish check in and check out with trusted adult</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Implement a home-school communication log</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Include movement breaks, energizers, and/or sensory breaks during instruction when possible</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Model using sentence frames for social situations. (e.g. I don't like when you, I wish you would.)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide "wait time" or "think time" for responding to questions or formulating discussion thoughts</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide opportunities for peer mediation and restorative practices to support conflict resolution</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide options to respond using non-verbal communication</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide sentence frames/starters for written or oral expression</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide social facilitation and coaching as needed</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide verbal and non-verbal prompts before calling on students</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Schedule check-ins with students throughout the day as needed</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Thoughtful selection when creating students' groups/partnerships</li> </ul>

## BEHAVIORAL REGULATION

**Behavioral regulation** refers to a student's ability to monitor and adjust their actions and impulses in response to environmental demands and personal goals. It's about self-control in how one acts and reacts. This includes: inhibiting impulses, following rules and expectations, adapting behavior and sustaining effort.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Access to concentration tools (e.g. fidget tools, flexible seating, noise cancelling headphones, quiet workspace, timers)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Allow a reasonable amount of extended time with clear expectations for assessments that determine a student's knowledge and mastery of content.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Allow access to sensory tools, grounding activities (mazes, dot to dots) to help regulate emotions</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Allow additional time and/or assistance for organization/packing at start and end of each day</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Allow the student to take the assessment in a separate setting</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Clearly state and revisit a purpose for the lesson focusing on language and content to maximize student opportunities to participate.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Create a "safe place" for the student to go to manage frustration and/or stress that meets their needs</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Encourage the student to use strategies to manage frustration and/or stress (e.g. using mindfulness, relaxation, and self-calming strategies)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Establish check in and check out with trusted adult</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Give directions and information in small chunks at a time</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Implement a home-school communication log</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Implement and monitor individualized organization systems (e.g. binders, folders, materials, electronic calendars, agenda planners)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Include movement breaks, energizers, and/or sensory breaks during instruction when possible</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Model using sentence frames for social situations. (e.g. I don't like when you, I wish you would.)</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Preview/cue expectations, transitions, and changes to the schedule</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide “wait time” or “think time” for responding to questions or formulating discussion thoughts</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide manipulatives when possible</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide opportunities for peer mediation and restorative practices to support conflict resolution</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide options for completion of assignments digitally or using paper and pencil when possible</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide options to respond using non-verbal communication</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide selective seating based on the student’s need (ie. front of class, back of class, near instruction, away from distractions)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide social facilitation and coaching as needed</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide structured choices for a student when they are struggling to meet expectations</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide student an alternate opportunity to demonstrate understanding when appropriate</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide task initiation supports (e.g. brainstorming, visual models/exemplars, set short-term goals/deadlines)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide the student with a subtle or nonverbal communication system to express emotional states during their school day</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide the student with natural breaks, such as water fountain or walk, as needed</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide verbal and non-verbal prompts before calling on students</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Schedule check-ins with students throughout the day as needed</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Thoughtful selection when creating students’ groups/partnerships</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● When addressing non-compliant behavior, limit verbal responses and directions</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● When possible, provide choices of equal value for successful task completion</li> </ul>

## INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

**Instructional Strategies** are the methods, techniques, and approaches that educators use to deliver content, engage students in learning, and help them achieve specific learning objectives. They are the deliberate choices teachers make about *how* they will teach, aiming to facilitate understanding, skill development, and knowledge retention.

- Access to concentration tools (e.g. fidget tools, flexible seating, noise cancelling headphones, quiet workspace, timers)
- Allow a reasonable amount of extended time with clear expectations for assessments that determine a student’s knowledge and mastery of content.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Allow access to sensory tools, grounding activities (mazes, dot to dots) to help regulate emotions</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Allow additional time and/or assistance for organization/packing at start and end of each day</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Allow the student to take the assessment in a separate setting</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Clearly state and revisit a purpose for the lesson focusing on language and content to maximize student opportunities to participate.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Create a “safe place” for the student to go to manage frustration and/or stress that meets their needs</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Encourage the student to use strategies to manage frustration and/or stress (e.g. using mindfulness, relaxation, and self-calming strategies)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Establish check in and check out with trusted adult</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Implement a home-school communication log</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Implement and monitor individualized organization systems (e.g. binders, folders, materials, electronic calendars, agenda planners)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Include movement breaks, energizers, and/or sensory breaks during instruction when possible</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Model using sentence frames for social situations. (e.g. I don’t like when you, I wish you would.)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Preview/cue expectations, transitions, and changes to the schedule</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide “wait time” or “think time” for responding to questions or formulating discussion thoughts</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide manipulatives when possible</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide opportunities for peer mediation and restorative practices to support conflict resolution</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide options to respond using non-verbal communication</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide selective seating based on the student’s need (ie. front of class, back of class, near instruction, away from distractions)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide social facilitation and coaching as needed</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide structured choices for a student when they are struggling to meet expectations</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide student an alternate opportunity to demonstrate understanding when appropriate</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide task initiation supports (e.g. brainstorming, visual models/exemplars, set short-term goals/deadlines)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide the student with a subtle or nonverbal communication system to express emotional states during their school day</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide the student with natural breaks, such as water fountain or walk, as needed</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide verbal and non-verbal prompts before calling on students</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schedule check-ins with students throughout the day as needed</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thoughtful selection when creating students' groups/partnerships</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When addressing non-compliant behavior, limit verbal responses and directions</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When possible, provide choices of equal value for successful task completion</li> </ul>

<p><b>ASSESSMENT</b></p>
<p><b>Assessment</b> refers to the systematic process of gathering and interpreting information about student learning and progress. It involves using a variety of methods to measure what students know, understand, and can do, and then using that information to make informed decisions about instruction, provide feedback, and report on achievement.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to concentration tools (e.g. fidget tools, flexible seating, noise cancelling headphones, quiet workspace, timers)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to organizational tools (e.g. graphic organizer, story map, visual checklist of steps)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to self-monitoring tools (e.g. revision/editing checklist)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow a reasonable amount of extended time with clear expectations for assessments that determine a student's knowledge and mastery of content.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow extra time for written output for in class assignments</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask the student to repeat directions in their own words</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Break down long term assignments with interim due dates and check-ins</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarify abstract or figurative language, such as metaphors, idioms and puns, within instructional moments</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearly state and revisit a purpose for the lesson focusing on language and content to maximize student opportunities to participate.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on demonstration of understanding of concepts and/or skills, rather than visual neatness when appropriate</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Following instruction, summarize key points with concise language (eg. paraphrase or bullet points)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give directions and information in small chunks at a time</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give multiple models and exemplars (achievable at different levels)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have the student highlight or underline keywords in the directions and/or in questions</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and/or emphasize key information and vocabulary</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include movement breaks, energizers, and/or sensory breaks during instruction when possible</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make expectations and goals for lessons and activities clear for students</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post homework in consistent location and bring attention to it during each class</li> </ul>

providing opportunities for students to record their homework
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide “wait time” or “think time” for responding to questions or formulating discussion thoughts</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide a copy of teacher or peer notes, skeletal notes, study guides, and/or reference guides</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide a graphic organizer to assist with organization of writing, notes, output, etc.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide context and/or background knowledge to support lesson objectives</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide exemplars for expected final product of assignment</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide frequent checks for lesson and assignment comprehension</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide manipulatives when possible</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide multimodal presentation of instruction and materials (ie. combination of visual, written, verbal)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide options for completion of assignments digitally or using paper and pencil when possible</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide selective seating based on the student’s need (ie. front of class, back of class, near instruction, away from distractions)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide sentence frames/starters for written or oral expression</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide skeleton note handouts to minimize copying demands from board in the classroom</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide structured choices for a student when they are struggling to meet expectations</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide student an alternate opportunity to demonstrate understanding when appropriate</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide task initiation supports (e.g. brainstorming, visual models/exemplars, set short-term goals/deadlines)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide word banks to support retrieval</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Read, repeat, and/or clarify directions out loud as needed</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reduce amount of written/visual information on page/screen/slide</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Scribe for student when needed as a means to assess student understanding</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Thoughtful selection when creating students’ groups/partnerships</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● When possible, provide choices of equal value for successful task completion</li> </ul>

## LANGUAGE PROCESSING

**Language processing** refers to the cognitive abilities involved in understanding and using language, encompassing both receptive (understanding what is heard or read) and expressive (communicating through speech or writing) aspects. Difficulties in language processing can impact a student's ability to follow instructions, comprehend lessons, express their thoughts, and develop reading and writing skills.

- Access to concentration tools (e.g. fidget tools, flexible seating, noise cancelling headphones, quiet workspace, timers)
- Allow a reasonable amount of extended time with clear expectations for assessments that determine a student's knowledge and mastery of content.
- Allow the student to take the assessment in a separate setting
- Ask the student to repeat directions in their own words
- Encourage the student to use strategies to manage frustration and/or stress (e.g. using mindfulness, relaxation, and self-calming strategies)
- Focus on demonstration of understanding of concepts and/or skills, rather than visual neatness when appropriate
- Have the student highlight or underline keywords in the directions and/or in questions
- Provide a graphic organizer to assist with organization of writing, notes, output, etc.
- Provide exemplars for expected final product of assignment
- Provide options for completion of assignments digitally or using paper and pencil when possible
- Provide sentence frames/starters for written or oral expression
- Provide student an alternate opportunity to demonstrate understanding when appropriate
- Provide student opportunity to verbally explain thinking when posed a short answer or open response question
- Provide word banks to support retrieval
- Read, repeat, and/or clarify directions out loud as needed
- Scribe for student when needed as a means to assess student understanding
- When possible, provide choices of equal value for successful task completion

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

**English Language Learners** are students whose native or home language is not English and who are in the process of acquiring English proficiency. The goal of supporting ELLs is to help them become proficient in English so they can fully participate and succeed in mainstream classrooms and the broader school environment.

- Access to organizational tools (e.g. graphic organizer, story map, visual checklist of steps)
- Access to self-monitoring tools (e.g. revision/editing checklist)
- Allow a reasonable amount of extended time with clear expectations for assessments that determine a student's knowledge and mastery of content.
- Allow extra time for written output for in class assignments
- Ask the student to repeat directions in their own words
- Break down long term assignments with interim due dates and check-ins
- Clarify abstract or figurative language, such as metaphors, idioms and puns, within instructional moments
- Clearly state and revisit a purpose for the lesson focusing on language and content to maximize student opportunities to participate.
- Following instruction, summarize key points with concise language (eg. paraphrase or bullet points)
- Give directions and information in small chunks at a time
- Have the student highlight or underline keywords in the directions and/or in questions
- Identify and/or emphasize key information and vocabulary
- Implement a home-school communication log
- Make expectations and goals for lessons and activities clear for students
- Model using sentence frames for social situations. (e.g. I don't like when you, I wish you would.)
- Post homework in consistent location and bring attention to it during each class providing opportunities for students to record their homework
- Provide "wait time" or "think time" for responding to questions or formulating discussion thoughts
- Provide a copy of teacher or peer notes, skeletal notes, study guides, and/or reference guides
- Provide a graphic organizer to assist with organization of writing, notes, output, etc.
- Provide context and/or background knowledge to support lesson objectives
- Provide frequent checks for lesson and assignment comprehension
- Provide multimodal presentation of instruction and materials (ie. combination of visual, written, verbal)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide options for completion of assignments digitally or using paper and pencil when possible</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide options to respond using non-verbal communication</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide selective seating based on the student's need (ie. front of class, back of class, near instruction, away from distractions)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide sentence frames/starters for written or oral expression</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide skeleton note handouts to minimize copying demands from board in the classroom</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide structured choices for a student when they are struggling to meet expectations</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide student an alternate opportunity to demonstrate understanding when appropriate</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide student opportunity to verbally explain thinking when posed a short answer or open response question</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide the student with a subtle or nonverbal communication system to express emotional states during their school day</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide verbal and non-verbal prompts before calling on students</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide verbal and/or visual cues to redirect attention to the task</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide word banks to support retrieval</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Read, repeat, and/or clarify directions out loud as needed</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reduce amount of written/visual information on page/screen/slide</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Scribe for student when needed as a means to assess student understanding</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Slow the rate of verbal directions/presentations</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● When addressing non-compliant behavior, limit verbal responses and directions</li> </ul>

## FINE AND GROSS MOTOR SKILLS

**Fine Motor Skills** refer to the coordination of small muscles, primarily in the hands, fingers, and wrists, working with the eyes. These skills allow for precise and delicate movements required for tasks such as writing, drawing, cutting with scissors, buttoning clothes, manipulating small objects, and using utensils. Development of fine motor skills is crucial for academic tasks and everyday self-care. **Gross Motor Skills** refer to the coordination and control of the large muscles in the body, including the arms, legs, and torso. These skills are essential for large movements and activities like walking, running, jumping, climbing, throwing, kicking, balancing, and sitting upright. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for overall physical development, mobility, and participation in physical activities and play.

- Access to organizational tools (e.g. graphic organizer, story map, visual checklist of steps)
- Access to self-monitoring tools (e.g. revision/editing checklist)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Allow a reasonable amount of extended time with clear expectations for assessments that determine a student’s knowledge and mastery of content.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Allow extra time for written output for in class assignments</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Allow the student to take the assessment in a separate setting</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ask the student to repeat directions in their own words</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Break down long term assignments with interim due dates and check-ins</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Clarify abstract or figurative language, such as metaphors, idioms and puns, within instructional moments</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Clearly state and revisit a purpose for the lesson focusing on language and content to maximize student opportunities to participate.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Establish check in and check out with trusted adult</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Following instruction, summarize key points with concise language (eg. paraphrase or bullet points)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Give directions and information in small chunks at a time</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Give multiple models and exemplars (achievable at different levels)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Identify and/or emphasize key information and vocabulary</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Implement and monitor individualized organization systems (e.g. binders, folders, materials, electronic calendars, agenda planners)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Make expectations and goals for lessons and activities clear for students</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Model using sentence frames for social situations. (e.g. I don’t like when you, I wish you would.)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Pair audio and visual texts with the ability to toggle between English and home language</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Post homework in consistent location and bring attention to it during each class providing opportunities for students to record their homework</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Preview/cue expectations, transitions, and changes to the schedule</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide “wait time” or “think time” for responding to questions or formulating discussion thoughts</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide a copy of teacher or peer notes, skeletal notes, study guides, and/or reference guides</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide a graphic organizer to assist with organization of writing, notes, output, etc.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide context and/or background knowledge to support lesson objectives</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide exemplars for expected final product of assignment</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide frequent checks for lesson and assignment comprehension</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide manipulatives when possible</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide multimodal presentation of instruction and materials (ie. combination of visual, written, verbal)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide options for completion of assignments digitally or using paper and pencil when</li> </ul>

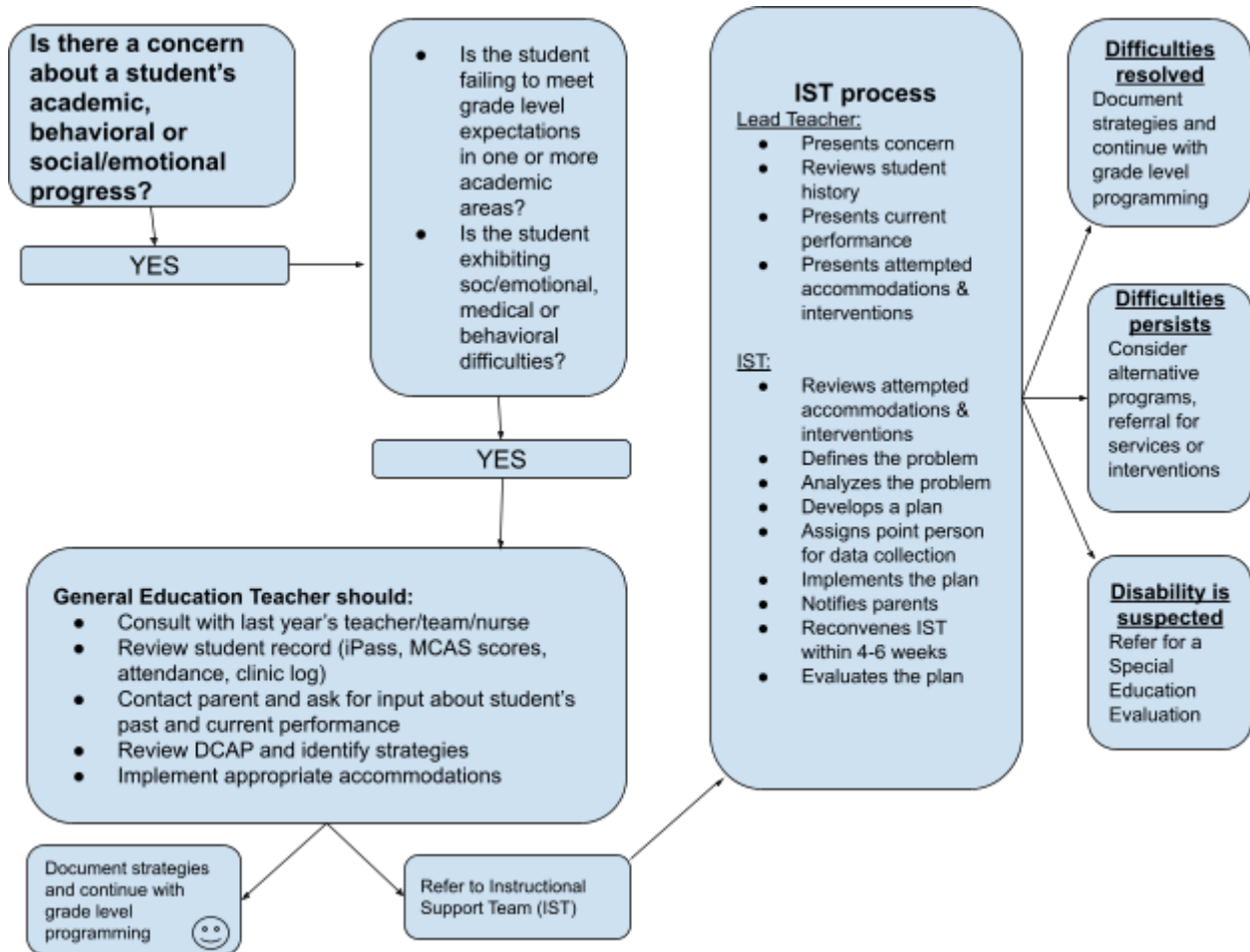
possible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide options to respond using non-verbal communication</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide selective seating based on the student's need (ie. front of class, back of class, near instruction, away from distractions)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide sentence frames/starters for written or oral expression</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide skeleton note handouts to minimize copying demands from board in the classroom</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide student an alternate opportunity to demonstrate understanding when appropriate</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide the student with a subtle or nonverbal communication system to express emotional states during their school day</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide verbal and non-verbal prompts before calling on students</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide verbal and/or visual cues to redirect attention to the task</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide word banks to support retrieval</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Read, repeat, and/or clarify directions out loud as needed</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reduce amount of written/visual information on page/screen/slide</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Schedule check-ins with students throughout the day as needed</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Scribe for student when needed as a means to assess student understanding</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Slow the rate of verbal directions/presentations</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Thoughtful selection when creating students' groups/partnerships</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● When possible, provide choices of equal value for successful task completion</li> </ul>

### **INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT TEAM (IST)**

General and special educators provide support to each other when addressing student learning needs. As a result, learning is supported through a clearly defined curriculum, differentiated instructional practices, and varied services geared to individual student needs. When a student presents with an academic, behavioral, or social/emotional concern, the general education teacher gathers information about the student's past performance and implements tiers of accommodations and services, including progress monitoring. When challenges persist, the teacher refers the student to the Instructional Support Team (IST). The primary goal of the Instructional Support Team (IST) is to ensure that a student experiencing a problem in school receives services quickly and efficiently. The team includes professionals with various skill sets and expertise to help address concerns and develop a plan based on a multi-tiered approach.

The IST process takes place when a student begins to exhibit significant academic, behavioral, social, or emotional problems compared to the average grade-level peer.

These significant concerns persist beyond the general educator’s initiative of providing tiers of academic and/or social support, including DCAP Accommodations.



### TEACHER MENTORING & INDUCTION

All professional staff members participate in a formal teacher induction program. The program provides high-quality professional development, 1:1 assistance, and an in-depth knowledge of Westford’s community, curriculum, and best instructional practices in their first year of employment.

Within the first three (3) years of employment, Westford Public Schools requires all professional staff members to demonstrate successful completion of Understanding Learning: Teaching All Students. The purpose of these modules is to inspire educators to be reflective and grow through the exploration of core academic approaches in the District. The course offers six (6) modules: Educating the Whole Child; Assessment for Learning; Accessible Learning for All; Making Student Thinking Visible; Project-Based Learning; and Support for Struggling Students.

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Westford Public Schools values parent involvement. Effective collaboration includes gathering information about the student's past and current successes and challenges. Instructional support efforts are most effective when parents are involved and provide support and reinforcement in the home environment. To promote stronger partnerships with families, Westford Public Schools offers the following opportunities to engage families as active partners in their students' learning:

- Parent-Teacher Organizations
- School Councils
- Special Education Parents Advisory Council (SEPAC)
- English Learner Parents Advisory Council (ELPAC)
- Principal and District Newsletters
- Informational Website
- Title I nights
- Annual Basic Rights in Special Education Training
- Preschool and Kindergarten Orientation
- School Counseling Workshops
- Annual Back to School Information Night
- Incoming Kindergarten Parent Information Night
- Kindergarten Screening