

PUPIL PROGRESSION PLAN 2015-2016



Phyllis A. Edwards, Ed.D., Superintendent

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INTRODUCTION

The City Schools of Decatur Board establishes this Pupil Progression Plan that outlines the procedures and requirements for promotion and graduation for the students in the City Schools of Decatur. This plan has been developed to provide each student with the maximum opportunity to succeed in school and gain an appropriate educational foundation.

The establishment of requirements for promotion and graduation are a necessary part of any instructional institution. It is expected that with appropriate motivation, the vast majority of City Schools of Decatur students who receive appropriate instruction can make satisfactory progress each year. It is expected that most will be able each year to achieve a level of academic proficiency and social and emotional development that will enable them to benefit from instruction at the next higher level. However, for a variety of reasons, individuals may require more or less than the usual amount of time in particular grade levels to develop their educational potential.

The Pupil Progression Plan is reviewed and amended annually to meet the needs of students in the City Schools of Decatur. All instructional personnel of the City Schools of Decatur are charged with the authority and responsibility to implement the City Schools of Decatur Pupil Progression Plan for the purposes of achieving state, district and school goals.

The City Schools of Decatur Board:

Members:	C. Garrett Goebel, Chair Julie P. Rhame, Vice Chair Annie P. Caiola Lewis B. Jones Bernadette J. Seals
Superintendent:	Phyllis A. Edwards, Ed.D.

I. District Wide Information

A. Entry

1. Age

a. All children and youth who have attained the age of five years by September 1 shall be eligible for enrollment in the appropriate general education programs authorized in this part unless they attain the age of 20 by September 1 or they have received high school diplomas or the equivalent. This shall specifically include students who have reenrolled after dropping out and who are married, parents, or pregnant. Special education students shall also be eligible for enrollment in appropriate education programs through age 21 or until they receive high school or special education diplomas or the equivalent; provided, however, they were enrolled during the preceding school year and had an approved Individualized Education Program (IEP) that indicated a successive year of enrollment was needed. Other students who have not yet attained age 21 by September 1 or received high school diplomas or the equivalent shall be eligible for enrollment in appropriate education programs, provided they have not dropped out of school for one quarter or more. Each local unit of administration shall have the authority to provide alternative programs beyond the regular daytime educational program.

b. A child who was a legal resident of one or more other states for a period of two years immediately prior to moving to this state and who was legally enrolled in a public kindergarten or first grade, or a kindergarten or first grade accredited by a state or regional association, shall be eligible for enrollment in the appropriate general or special education programs authorized in this part if such child will attain the age of five for kindergarten or six for first grade by December 31 and is otherwise qualified.

c. All primary schools have the right to assess the incoming student and make a recommendation for grade placement.

d. All children enrolled for 20 school days or more in Georgia public schools must continue their education, even though they have not attained seven years of age. If a child is withdrawn, the family must submit an intent of home schooling within the prescribed time.

2. Required Materials needed for entry

a. Completed Enrollment Form
City Schools of Decatur, in its enrollment procedures, requirements, does not and will not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, or Immigration status.

- b. Proof of Residency
 - (1) Parents or guardians are required to provide proof of residency upon initial enrollment of their child and may be required to periodically verify their residency in the City Schools of Decatur upon request.
 - (2) This is not required for tuition students.
- c. One document is required from **Section 1** and **Section 2** shown below:
 - (1) **Section 1** (one item from either “a” or “b”)
 - (a) Proof of home ownership
 - (i) Warranty deed, quit-claim deed or security deed
 - (ii) Mortgage statement or payment coupon
 - (iii) Property tax statement
 - (iv) Settlement statement (HUD-1)
 - (b) Proof of leased address
 - (i) Lease (all leases are subject to verification from landlord)
 - (a) Lease period must be current (not expired)
 - (b) Lease must have an end date
 - (c) Lease must be signed and dated by tenant and landlord
 - (d) Student’s name must appear on lease as occupant
 - (e) Lease must have name, address and phone number of landlord
 - (ii) Signed lease verification form
 - (2) **Section 2**
 - (a) Utility Bill (current: within last 30 days; must state address of the legal residence)
 - (i) Power, water, or gas
- d. Parent/Legal Guardian Photo ID:
 - (1) Any valid state or federal government-issued photo ID
 - (2) Valid U.S. passport ID or U.S. military photo ID
 - (3) Or other official photo identification, such as an ID card obtained through an official government agency or consulate
- e. Birth Certificate (original or certified copy)
The school system requires evidence of the student’s date of birth and/or an alternate document from the prioritized list in the State Enrollment Rule (JBC 160-5-1-28)
- f. Custody Documentation (if applicable)
 - (1) Upon registering in the City Schools of Decatur, a parent must provide satisfactory documentation of a relationship with the student to be registered. Examples of satisfactory documentation include the following:
 - (a) Divorce Decree
 - (b) Adoptive parent – official adoption decree
 - (c) Guardian – original official guardianship decree
 - (d) Foster parent – official foster parent letter

- g. Student Social Security Card
- h. Hearing, Vision & Dental Screening Certificate (GA Form 3300)
- i. Certificate of Immunization (GA Form 3231)
- j. School Records

B. PreKindergarten

1. Spring Pre-K registration

- a. Occurs at the City Schools of Decatur Central Office
- b. Child must be four (4) years of age by September 1 of the school year for requested enrollment
- c. Priority enrollment
 - (1) Children who are actively enrolled in the College Heights ECLC three year-old program will be matriculated into the City Schools of Decatur/Bright From the Start pre-K program.
 - (2) Child resides in the City of Decatur
 - (3) Child resides outside the City of Decatur and parent/guardian employed by City Schools of Decatur
 - (4) Child resides outside the City of Decatur (Tuition applications available at www.csdecatur.net)

2. Required for registration

- a. Proof of residence
- b. Birth certificate
- c. Social Security Number
- d. Certificate of Immunization (GA Form 3231)
- e. Hearing, Vision & Dental Screening Certificate (GA Form 3300)
(Required within the first 90 days of school)

3. Procedures for Pre-K Lottery

- a. Public lottery is held at 12:00 pm on the first school day in March following February registration
- b. Twins are entered into the lottery on one ticket.
- c. Students go on wait list in the order in which their name is drawn.
- d. A priority waitlist is maintained for siblings of children currently enrolled at College Heights and for full-time Frasier Center students who reside in the City of Decatur.

C. Placement of Students

1. Multiples (e.g., twins)

- a. A school must place twins or higher order multiples from the same family together in the same classroom if the following takes place:
 - (1) the children's parent or legal guardian requests the placement no later than 5 days before the first day of each school year, or 5 days after the first day of attendance of the children during a school year if the children are enrolled in the school after the school year commences.
 - (2) the children are in the same grade level
 - (3) at the same school, and
 - (4) meet the eligibility requirements of the class
- b. The school may deny a placement request if factual performance evidence shows proof that these specific students should be separated.

2. Requests

- a. Children of staff
 - (1) It is preferred that instructional staff (teachers, paraprofessionals) do not teach their own children.
- b. Siblings of children who have been students in classrooms of specific teachers will not automatically be placed in the same classroom or with the same teachers.
- c. Requests for specific teachers are not allowed in grades PreK-12; families may submit, in writing, the specific needs of the child and the classroom environment that would best serve him/her.

3. Foreign Students

- a. Foreign Exchange Students (J-1 Visa-cultural exchange student)
 - (1) A foreign exchange student shall be defined as a secondary school student who requests authorization for enrollment in City Schools of Decatur through a foreign exchange agency approved by the State Department of the United States Government and possesses a valid DS-2019 Certificate of Eligibility.
 - (2) Foreign exchange students must be at least 15 years of age, but not more than 18 years and six months of age as of the program start date, or not have finished more than 11 years of primary and secondary school, not including kindergarten; and not have previously participated in a secondary school student academic year or semester exchange program or attended school in the United States in either F-1 or J-1 status.
 - (3) Foreign exchange students are eligible for enrollment as full-time students. Items (a), (b), and (d) listed below must be

submitted for admission no later than June 15 prior to the school year of enrollment or no less than 60 days prior to the semester of enrollment. The remaining records listed below must be submitted prior to student's final enrollment and attendance. If all required documents are not submitted, student will not be enrolled.

Required records include:

- (a) a completed Foreign Exchange Agency Placement Acceptance form executed by the agency and by the proper school official and a completed City Schools of Decatur Enrollment Application;
- (b) an official transcript of school records with a translation signed by a translator;
- (c) a copy of valid DS-2019 Certificate of Eligibility and English proficiency statement signed by the agency;
- (d) a copy of the sponsoring organization application completed by the student;
- (e) medical or immunization forms; and
- (f) a copy of the student's visa.

b. Foreign Students (F-1 Student Visa)

(1) A foreign visa student shall be defined as a student who requests authorization for enrollment in City Schools of Decatur under an F-1 student visa.

(2) Secondary school attendance is limited to twelve months. F-1 secondary school students are required to pay the school the full cost of education by repaying the school system for the full, unsubsidized, per capita cost of providing the education to him or her. *The requirements in this paragraph apply only to secondary school students.

(3) Foreign Students are eligible for enrollment as full-time students. Their records must be in order for admission no later than June 15 prior to the school year of enrollment or no less than 60 days prior to the semester of enrollment. Required records include:

- (a) a completed City Schools of Decatur Enrollment Application;
- (b) an official transcript of school records with a translation signed by a translator;
- (c) a valid I-20 and English proficiency statement;
- (d) medical or immunization forms; and
- (e) a copy of student's visa.

c. All Other Visas – Students with other visas should consult with Central Office administrative personnel to determine applicable requirements.

d. Grade Placement for Foreign Students

(1) Each foreign student with educational documentation will receive a recommended grade placement after an evaluation of

the student's educational records has been made. A certified translation to English of the educational documentation will be requested of the family. Adjustments to these recommended placements may be made by the school principal in accordance with relevant State Board of Education rules. A combination of age appropriateness, previous school experience and academic proficiency (if available) will be taken into consideration when placing students. Students who do not meet regular age requirements for entering kindergarten in Georgia, but who attended kindergarten in their native country must have an official letter or transcript from proper school authority which shows record of attendance, academic information, and grade placement of the student before being admitted to kindergarten.

(2) A foreign student without educational documentation shall be initially assigned to an elementary, middle or senior high school based on the following criteria:

(a) The age of the student as of September 1 of the school year shall be the official age used to determine the appropriate school level for placement.

(b) Students will be assigned to schools according to chronological age as follows:

- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| (i) 5-10 years | elementary school |
| (ii) 11 years | elementary or middle school |
| (iii) 12-13 years | middle school |
| (iv) 14 years | middle or high |
| (v) 15 or older | high school |

(3) A notarized statement indicating completion of a particular grade level from the student's parents(s), guardian(s), a school official from the student's native country or from the student, if an adult, may be submitted to the principal of the receiving school.

(4) Special care should be exercised to ensure that a student's limited English proficiency is not a factor to be considered in determining grade placement.

(5) Ultimately, grade placement is the responsibility of the principal in cooperation with the professional staff of the school.

(6) A high school diploma will not be issued through this program. Foreign exchange students shall receive a certificate of participation. Students will be allowed to participate in graduation ceremonies if they are a senior in their home school.

D. Exceptional Student Services

1. See Section VI: Exceptional Student Services.
2. Learners labeled as gifted, see Section VI: Exceptional Student Services.

E. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

1. See K-12 Support Services

F. Title I Targeted Assistance Program

1. See Title I Targeted Assistance Program

G. Progression of Students

1. See individual grade span sections: Elementary, Middle, High.

H. Educational Opportunities for Dependent Children of Active Military Personnel

1. Placement expediency
 - a. It is the policy of the district to provide educational opportunities for dependent children, either of whose parents was a resident of the district at the time such parent entered a branch of the United States Armed Forces. In accordance with state law and rule, the district will expedite the placement of such students including any special services to which they may be entitled.
 - b. Dependent children of active-duty military personnel who otherwise meet the eligibility criteria for special academic programs will be given first preference for admission to such programs.

I. Home Study and Private School (O.S.G.A. 20-2-690)

1. "Private school" definition
 - a. The primary purpose of the institution is to provide education or, if the primary purpose of the institution is religious in nature, the institution shall provide the basic academic educational program (which includes, but is not limited to, reading, language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science);
 - b. The institution is privately controlled and operates on a continuing basis;
 - c. The institution provides instruction each year for the equivalent of 180 school days of education with each school day consisting of at least four and one-half school hours;
 - d. Within 30 days after the beginning of each school year, it shall be the duty of the administrator of each private school to provide to the school superintendent of each local public school district which has residents enrolled in the private school a list of the name, age, and residence of each resident so enrolled. At the end of each school month, it shall be the duty of the administrator of each private school to notify the school superintendent of each local public school district of

the name, age, and residence of each student residing in the public school district who enrolls or terminates enrollment at the private school during the immediately preceding school month. Such records shall indicate when attendance has been suspended and the grounds for such suspension. Enrollment records and reports shall not be used for any purpose except providing necessary enrollment information, except with the permission of the parent or guardian of a child, pursuant to the subpoena of a court of competent jurisdiction, or for verification of attendance by the Department of Public Safety;

e. Any building used by the institution for private school purposes meets all health and safety standards established under state law and local ordinances.

2. Home Study Program requirements

a. Home Study Program Declaration of Intent should be submitted to the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE). This form should be submitted electronically using the GaDOE website:
<http://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Pages/Home-Schools.aspx>.

b. The following items are required for enrollment purposes for home school students along with other required registration documents:

(1) Copy of Declaration of Intent form submitted to the Georgia Department of Education;

(2) Progress Report/Report Card for Reading, Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science;

(3) Attendance Reports from home school showing school attendance equivalent of 180 days of at least 4 ½ hours of instruction per day;

(4) Nationally normed assessments in grades 3, 6, 9, and 12 and placement assessments given in Reading, Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science; and

(5) Withdrawal Form from home school program.

J. Educational Opportunities for Homeless Children

1. Definitions

a. General

(1) The McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth Act is designed to address the problems that homeless children and youth have faced in enrolling, attending, and succeeding in school. Under this program, state educational agencies must ensure that each homeless child and youth has

equal access to a free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as other children and youth.

2. Eligibility

a. **Homeless children and youth** are individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. The term includes children and youth who are:

(1) sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason (sometimes referred to as “doubled up”).

(2) living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations.

(3) living in emergency or transitional shelters.

(4) abandoned in hospitals or

(5) awaiting foster care placement.

(6) living in a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

(7) children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings.

(8) migratory - children living in aforementioned circumstances.

(9) unaccompanied youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

b. Other definitions/terms

(1) **Parents** are the child's natural or adoptive mother or father.

(2) A **Legal Custodian** is a person who has been given custody of the child by a court of proper jurisdiction.

(3) A **Legal Guardian** is the person to whom a probate judge has transferred statutory parental rights for the child.

(4) **School Record** is an official transcript or grade record from the school last attended showing courses/subjects taken, grades/credits earned, and grade-level placement.

(5) **School of origin** is the last school where students have received a majority of instruction for that academic school year.

(6) **Unaccompanied Youth** is a youth not in the physical custody of a parent. This means that the youth is not living with a parent or

guardian, and includes youth who are residing with a caregiver who does not have legal guardianship and youth who are living on their own.

3. School Admission/Enrollment

a. McKinney-Vento Guidelines

(1) City Schools of Decatur is committed to ensuring that the rights of every student in a transitional housing situation are upheld according to the following McKinney-Vento guidelines:

- (a) enroll students in school immediately-even if unable to provide records normally required.
- (b) keep students in “school of origin” to the extent feasible or allow to enroll in school in present attendance area according to their best interest.
- (c) allow students to stay in their school of origin the entire time homeless and until end of academic year that they move into permanent housing.
- (d) assist “unaccompanied youth” with enrollment and inform them of their rights.
- (e) inform school personnel of requirements of the law and needs of unaccompanied youth.

b. School Enrollment

(1) School of Origin: Preserving a sense of stability is a key component to our services for children. Therefore, to the extent feasible, efforts will be made to keep students in their schools or origin to maintain academic continuity.

(2) City Schools of Decatur Enrollment

- (a) When it is not feasible for homeless students to remain in their schools of origin, students enroll at City Schools of Decatur’s Central Office. Signs and posters are prominently displayed in the area shelters, hotels, motels or extended stay lodges in the community. Each posting provides families with information regarding the McKinney-Vento Act, parents’ rights, registration, and contact numbers.
- (b) Upon entry, homeless families receive assistance from the school system social worker, family outreach liaison, or homeless liaison. During the centralized enrollment process, parents/guardians complete enrollment forms that self-identify their homeless status. Students receive school supplies and arrangements are made for transportation, afterschool care, and tutorial services as needed. All students are enrolled immediately. There is only one high school, one middle school, and one 4th-5th grade academy. K-3 students are also enrolled immediately, but school assignments are made according to school enrollment numbers for the students’ identified grade levels.
- (c) Unaccompanied youth, who self-identify or are identified by school staff receive support from the Homeless Education Department and receive the same services as other homeless children and youth, including free lunch, assistance with transportation, tutoring, and other services as needed.

(d) If a dispute arises during enrollment the student will be seated pending resolution of the dispute: The parent/guardian of the homeless student will be provided with a written explanation of the enrollment decision, including the rights of parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth to appeal the decision (see appeal process).

(e) It is important to remember that in some instances, families may arrive for enrollment without the typically required documents (i.e. medical records, proof of residency, etc). By law, schools must enroll the homeless student immediately, even without the family producing various documents. The student can attend class while the Homeless Education Department and/or school arranges for the transfer of school and immunization records.

Note: If the student will be remaining in their school of origin (not a City Schools of Decatur school), the school social worker will collaborate with the school of origin to assist with the coordination of the student's school enrollment.

(f) The school social worker and family outreach liaison will remain in contact with families in transition to offer support and services as needed. Services may include, referrals for legal assistance, food pantry referrals, counseling, case management/preventive services, etc.

(3) Transportation

(a) Upon enrollment, the Homeless Education Department will contact the Transportation Department to make bus transportation arrangements for transitional students, when applicable.

(b) In an effort to maintain educational stability, City Schools of Decatur will support transitional students to attend their school of origin whenever feasible and in the child's best interest. The following considerations are reviewed when determining transportation decisions:

(i) Commute so lengthy it would be harmful to child's educational achievement

(ii) Commute may create a safety issue

(iii) Child's age

(iv) Child's grade level

(v) Child-by-child determination

(c) MARTA Breeze cards or gas vouchers are provided upon request by the social worker, family outreach liaison, and/or the Homeless Liaison. Parents receiving transportation support must sign receipts that are filed for documentation. As per guidance from the GaDOE, each school system determines the gas voucher reimbursement rate and is shared when applicable.

(d) Bus transportation is provided to/from locations within the school district. Bus transportation to schools of origin outside our attendance area will be coordinated between school districts on a case-by-case basis. Funding for transportation outside the district will be provided by the CSD Transportation Department.

(4) After-school tutorial services

(a) Transitional parents requesting after school tutorial services for their children must complete program applications, the program's financial assistance packets, and transportation permission forms. Forms must be submitted and authorized by the CSD homeless liaison prior to students' participation. Students are assigned to after school programs according to parent's choice and availability of space.

(5) Records Requirements

(a) In compliance with the McKinney-Vento Law, homeless students will be enrolled even if the student is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment, such as previous academic records, medical records or other documentation. While the requirement of these records is not waived, the school will not prohibit enrollment due to the immediate lack of the necessary records. The parent/guardian will be assisted in obtaining all necessary school records.

(6) Comparable Services

(a) Homeless children and youth must have access to the educational and other services that they need to enable them to meet the same challenging state student academic achievement standards to which all students are held. In addition, homeless students may not be separated from the mainstream school environment. Homeless Children and Youth are entitled to the following:

(i) Transportation services

(ii) Education Services for which the homeless student meets eligibility criteria, such as Title I, educational programs for children with disabilities and educational programs for students with limited English proficiency.

(iii) Programs for gifted and talented students

(iv) School Nutrition programs (free breakfast/lunch)

(7) Appeal Process

(a) If a dispute arises, the student will be seated pending resolution of the dispute. The parent/guardian of the homeless student and/or unaccompanied youth will be provided with a written explanation of the enrollment decision, including their rights to appeal the decision.

4. Enrollment Disputes

a. Procedure

(1) The student shall be immediately admitted to the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute.

(2) Parents must complete dispute documents and submit their requests in writing to the Homeless Education team for review.

(3) If the parents' request is denied, they may submit in writing their request to the Homeless Liaison and may schedule an appointment to present their case.

(4) The parents may appeal the decision of the Homeless Education Department and liaison by submitting an additional written request to the Superintendent,

(5) The Superintendent may present the dispute documents to the City Schools of Decatur attorney for review and investigation.

(6) After the review and investigation, the findings and recommendations will be made by the superintendent's office and all parties will be apprised of the result.

(7) In the event the dispute cannot be resolved locally, the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth may request a review of the dispute from the Georgia Department of Education.

K. Tuition

1. Courtesy

a. The child of a full-time employee that is eligible to receive benefits shall be eligible for courtesy tuition and enrollment in the City Schools of Decatur. In accordance with O.C.G.A. §20-2-293 (b), and agreement with the City Schools of Decatur Charter with the State Board of Education, a student shall be allowed to attend and be enrolled in the school in which a parent or guardian of such student is a fulltime teacher, professional, or other employee, notwithstanding the fact that such school is not located in the local unit of administration in which such student resides.

b. A tuition application must be completed annually for each student requesting courtesy tuition and enrollment. To receive consideration for courtesy tuition and enrollment, the student, unless specified by state law, must be in good standing with the City Schools of Decatur if he or she has previously been enrolled in this system or in the school system from which the employee/parent seeks to transfer the student.

c. Acceptance or rejection of an application shall lie within the sole discretion of the City Schools of Decatur. Information included in the consideration of an application may include, but is not limited to, progress reports, attendance records, and disciplinary records maintained by the City Schools of Decatur or by the school system from which the employee/parent seeks to transfer the child.

2. Paying

a. A student who lives outside the city limits of Decatur but wishes to attend the City Schools of Decatur shall be a tuition student. A student who has not reached his/her eighteenth birthday, who lives within the city limits, but not with his/her parent or guardian, and wishes to attend City Schools of Decatur shall be a tuition student. The only exceptions

shall be special cases as specified in this policy. Every effort shall be made to maintain consistency in a tuition student's school assignment.

3. Rationale for denial

a. Per Board policy on Nonresident Students, students whose parents or legal guardian(s) are not bona fide residents of the City of Decatur may attend a school in the City of Decatur under the following conditions which may be waived by the superintendent:

(1) Said student is in good standing with the school previously attended, having demonstrated consistently good attendance, satisfactory discipline, and the readiness/qualifications for the grade/program in which he/she is seeking enrollment. A student who has withdrawn from previously attended school to avoid any form of disciplinary action may not enroll in the City Schools of Decatur. A student withdrawing for poor attendance or unsatisfactory academic performance may not enroll in City Schools of Decatur.

(2) The board of education reserves the right to establish enrollment limits in all grades, classes, and/or programs.

(3) The admission of the said student will not require the City Schools of Decatur to hire additional staff or contract for any additional services.

4. Examination criteria

a. Returning courtesy and paying tuition

(1) 6 or more absences in current school year until application submission

(2) 6 or more tardies in current school year until application submission

(3) 1 or more office referrals in current school year until application submission

(4) discipline record in current school year contains any state-reported offense

(5) failing/unsatisfactory 1 or more subjects in any reporting period

b. New courtesy and paying tuition

(1) 6 or more absences in current school year until application submission

(2) 6 or more tardies in current school year until application submission

(3) 1 or more office referrals in a specific year within in the last two years

(4) discipline record in last three years contains any state-reported offense

(5) failing/unsatisfactory 1 or more subjects in any reporting period

5. Approval procedure

a. Tuition Process

(1) Families notified in spring about upcoming year's process including contract

(2) All current paying tuition families are reviewed by the finance department to assure a pattern of on-time payments.

(3) Instructional Services administrators review packet for each student containing the following:

(a) Attendance

(b) Grade reports

(c) Discipline/behavior

(4) Recommendations include the following choices:

(a) Approval

(b) Approval with condition(s)

(c) Denial

(5) Regular education recommendations made by Instructional Services administrators and special education recommendations made by Special Education administrators all submitted to principals of matriculating schools

(6) Principals make determinations with the same three choices:

(a) Approval

(b) Approval with condition(s)

(c) Denial

(7) Instructional Services administrators report findings to superintendent for final determinations

(8) Instructional Services communicate determinations with families

L. Transfers

1. Policy JBCD: Transfers and Withdrawals

a. Administrative transfer

(1) (Ex. maximum class size, retention, mid-year change of address, No Child Left Behind)

b. Other

(1) written request to superintendent for approval or denial (Ex. hardship)

M. Observation in Schools

1. Internships, field experiences, practica

a. Any college or university student will need approval from Instructional Services (404.371-3601). Universities must request permission.

b. University students that only need observation hours may contact the schools directly.

c. Background checks are required and must be verified by the institution of higher education. In some cases, CSD Human Resources will arrange for this verification.

2. Current family procedures

a. Limitations on who may visit

(1) To ensure the safety and confidentiality of students, the District limits visitors to: (1) The parents/guardians of current students; (2) Other family members of current students who are approved by the student's parent/guardian; (3) Those persons invited by the District for official business; and (4) Outside service providers who currently provide private educational or therapy services to a student.

b. Upon request, the Principal or designee may, at his/her discretion, grant permission for visits by the parents/guardians of current students, other family members of current students who are approved by the student's parent/guardian, and those persons invited by the District for official business. To minimize disruption to the instructional program, visits to classrooms or programs or requests to meet with specific personnel must comply with the following guidelines:

(1) All visitors must sign-in at the school office and obtain written permission to visit any part of the school

(2) Visits generally require notice at least 24 hours in advance

(3) Parents/guardians may observe for up to 45 minutes during a classroom visitation; however, individuals who are invited by the District for official business may be granted extended time periods as necessary to perform their functions at the discretion of the District

(4) Classroom visitations are not a time for parent-teacher conferences and parents/guardians should not expect teachers to conference with them at these times

(5) Parents may not bring minor children to observe in the classroom as this disrupts the school program.

(6) The regular school program must continue during such visits so parents/guardians must refrain from engaging the attention of the teacher or students through conversation or other means.

c. The Principal at his/her discretion may accompany the observer or assign another CSD employee to that task.

d. Additional Guidelines for Outside Providers

(1) Upon request, the Principal or designee may, at his/her discretion, grant permission for visits by outside service providers who currently provide private educational or therapy services to a current student. To minimize disruption to the instructional program, outside service providers must comply with the guidelines above for all visitors plus the following additional guidelines:

(a) Be currently providing educational or therapy services to the student;

- (b) Present to the Principal or designee a Release of Confidential Information signed by the parent/guardian with:
 - (i) The original to be retained in the student's special education file at the school; and
 - (ii) A copy to be sent to the special education records room;
- (c) Sign a Confidentiality Agreement prior to conducting an observation. The Principal or designee shall collect the form and:
 - (i) Give the original to the student's case manager to be retained in the student's special education file at the school; and
 - (ii) A copy to be sent the special education records room;
- (d) Have the parent/guardian coordinate the observation date and time;
- (e) Limit the observation to one hour unless an extended time period has been granted in advance of the scheduled observation (the extension is at the discretion of the District); and
- (f) Act in such a manner that allows the regular school program to continue during the visit by refraining from engaging the attention of the teacher or student(s) through conversation or other means.

N. Multi-Year Classrooms

1. Definition

- a. A group of students that stay with a homeroom teacher in PK-5 for more than one school year.
- b. Multi-year classrooms foster a number of conditions that are crucial in creating environments that support learning:
 - (1) Close, ongoing, multi-year relationships among students, teachers and parents
 - (2) Multi-year connection of instructional approaches
 - (3) A sense of shared responsibility for student outcomes
 - (4) High quality, instructionally-based shared decision making

2. Procedures

- a. Multi-year classrooms will be on a voluntary basis by student and teacher
- b. Parents will have the option on an annual basis to request in writing that a student's placement be moved from a multi-year classroom
- c. Final decision to move a student from the multi-year classroom will be the decision of the school administrator
- d. In order to have a clear understanding of the instructional framework, teachers new to the City Schools of Decatur can be considered for a multi-year classroom based on the following:
 - (1) Five years of teaching experience in another system or school and one year of teaching in CSD, or
 - (2) Three years of teaching experience in CSD, or
 - (3) Teachers who have previously looped classrooms in CSD, and
 - (4) Gifted endorsed
- e. After the first year of a multi-year classroom data from the Measures of Academic Progress will be reviewed. In order for the cohort to continue at least 50% of students must meet their growth projection in at least 2 of the 3 MAP areas

O. Immunization

1. Immunization Requirements

- a. Students are required to have GA Immunization Forms 3231 current.

2. Certificates must:

- a. Be signed by a physician licensed in GA or a public health department official. A stamp of a physician's signature is permissible when cosigned by an office staff member.
- b. Have a printed, typed or stamped name and address of the physician, health department or Georgia Registry of Immunization Transaction and Services (GRITS) official issuing the certificate
- c. Have a complete date of issue with the month, day and year
- d. Be marked as "Complete for Attendance" or have a future expiration date. Expired certificates will not be accepted for enrollment.

3. Medical and/or Religious Exemptions:

- a. Waivers of immunization requirements due to conflict of religious belief must be signed, dated and notarized.
- b. Medical waivers/exemptions are a part of Georgia form 3231 and must be annually updated.
- c. In the event of a vaccine-preventable disease outbreak, children with medical or religious exemptions will be excluded from attending school until officials deem it safe for their return.

4. Immunization Audit Procedures

a. An annual audit of all kindergarten and seventh grade student files for immunization records is required in the fall of each year. For those students without immunization records or who are out of compliance with required immunizations the following steps apply:

(1) Letters requesting proof of updated immunization records on Department of Human Resource Form 3231 will be mailed to families within 7 days of the audit. Updated records should be returned to school office 2 weeks from date of letter.

(2) If the updated Form 3231 is not received by 2 weeks from letter date, student will be withdrawn. Student will be reinstated when immunization record is received.

b. In preparation for the fall immunization audit, the following steps will occur during the preceding early winter and spring:

(1) Pre-K and 6th grade student records will be reviewed by the school nurse in the spring.

(2) In the spring, for those students missing immunization records or out of compliance with immunization requirements, letters will be sent to parents of students requesting proof of updated immunizations by the end of the current school year.

(3) During the spring, the school nurse will follow up with identified students/families that have immunization needs.

(4) Reminder notices will be placed as needed in Pre-K and Renfro Middle School newsletters in the spring.

(5) In late May, a final letter will be sent to families of students who remain out of compliance. The letter will state that the student will need to have documentation of updated immunizations recorded on state form 3231 in the file prior to the start of school.

P. Testing

Dates for state mandated tests are subject to change by the Georgia Department of Education.

1. Tests

- a. ACCESS: Assessing Comprehension & Communication in English State to State for English Language Learners
- b. AP: Advanced Placement Exam
- c. CogAT: Cognitive Ability Test
- d. GMAS: Georgia Milestones Assessment System: end-of-grade assessment
- e. GMAS: Georgia Milestones Assessment System: end-of-course assessment
- f. GAA: Georgia Alternate Assessment
- g. GKIDS: Georgia Kindergarten Inventory for Developing Skills
- h. IB: International Baccalaureate
- i. MAP: Measures of Academic Progress
- j. PSAT: Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test
- k. SLO: Student Learning Objectives

2. Schedule

- a. Kindergarten
 - (1) GKids: Ongoing
 - (2) MAP
 - (a) August 10-September 3
 - (b) November 30-December 18
 - (c) April 28-May 19
 - (3) SLO Pre-Test: August 3-September 11
 - (4) SLO Post Test: April 25-May 27
- b. First Grade
 - (1) CogAT: October 5-8
 - (2) MAP
 - (a) August 10-September 3
 - (b) November 30-December 18
 - (c) April 28-May 29
 - (3) SLO Pre-Test: August 3-September 11
 - (4) SLO Post-Test: April 25-May 27
- c. Second Grade
 - (1) MAP
 - (a) August 10-September 3
 - (b) November 30-December 18
 - (c) April 28-May 19
 - (2) SLO Pre-Test: August 3-September 11
 - (3) SLO Post-Test: April 25-May 27
- d. Third Grade
 - (1) GMAS: April 26-May 6
 - (2) MAP
 - (a) August 10-September 3

- (b) November 30-December 18
 - (c) April 28-May 19
 - (3) SLO Pre-Test: August 3-September 11
 - (4) SLO Post-Test: April 25-May 27
- e. Fourth Grade
- (1) CogAT: October 5-8
 - (2) GMAS: April 26-May 6
 - (3) MAP
 - (a) August 10-September 3
 - (b) November 30-December 18
 - (c) April 28-May 19
 - (4) SLO Pre-Test: August 3-September 11
 - (5) SLO Post-Test: April 25-May 27
- f. Fifth Grade
- (1) GMAS: April 26-May 6
 - (2) MAP
 - (a) August 10-September 3
 - (b) November 30-December 18
 - (c) April 28-May 19
 - (3) SLO Pre-Test: August 3-September 11
 - (4) SLO Post-Test: April 25-May 27
- g. Sixth Grade
- (1) CogAT: October 5-8
 - (2) GMAS: April 26-May 6
 - (3) MAP
 - (a) August 10-September 3
 - (b) November 30-December 18
 - (c) April 28-May 19
 - (4) SLO Pre-Test: August 3-September 11
 - (5) SLO Post-Test: April 25-May 27
- h. Seventh Grade
- (1) GMAS: April 26-May 6
 - (2) MAP
 - (a) August 10-September 3
 - (b) November 30-December 18
 - (c) April 28-May 19
 - (3) SLO Pre-Test: August 3-September 11
 - (4) SLO Post-Test: April 25-May 27
- i. Eighth Grade
- (1) GMAS: April 26-May 6
 - (2) MAP
 - (a) August 10-September 3
 - (b) November 30-December 18
 - (c) April 28-May 19
 - (3) EOC: May 4-20
 - (4) SLO Pre-Test: August 3-September 11
 - (5) SLO Post-Test: April 25-May 27

- j. Ninth Grade
 - (1) EOC: December 7-18
 - (2) EOC/AP: May 4-20
 - (3) EOC: July 6-20
 - (4) MAP
 - (a) August 10-September 3
 - (b) November 30-December 18
 - (c) April 11-22
 - (5) SLO Pre-Test 36 Week: August 3-September 11
 - (6) SLO Pre-Test 18 Week: August 3-14, January 5-15
 - (7) SLO Post-Test 36 Week: April 25-May 27
 - (8) SLO Post-Test 18 Week: December 7-18, May 16-27

- k. Tenth Grade
 - (1) PSAT: October 14
 - (2) EOC: December 7-18
 - (3) EOC/AP: May 4-20
 - (4) EOC: July 6-17
 - (5) MAP
 - (a) August 10-September 3
 - (b) November 30-December 18
 - (c) April 11-22
 - (6) SLO Pre-Test 36 Week: August 3-September 11
 - (7) SLO Pre-Test 18 Week: August 3-14, January 5-15
 - (8) SLO Post-Test 36 Week: April 25-May 27
 - (9) SLO Post-Test 18 Week: December 7-18, May 16-27

- l. Eleventh Grade
 - (1) PSAT: October 14
 - (2) EOC: December 7-18
 - (3) EOC/AP/IB: May 4-20
 - (4) EOC: July 6-17
 - (5) SLO Pre-Test 36 Week: August 3-September 11
 - (6) SLO Pre-Test 18 Week: August 3-14, January 5-15
 - (7) SLO Post-Test 36 Week: April 25-May 27
 - (8) SLO Post-Test 18 Week: December 7-18, May 16-27

- m. Twelfth Grade
 - (1) ASVAB: October 1
 - (2) EOC: December 7-18
 - (3) EOC/AP/IB: May 4-20
 - (4) EOC: July 6-17
 - (5) SLO Pre-Test 36 Week: August 3-September 11
 - (6) SLO Pre-Test 18 Week: August 3-14, January 5-15
 - (7) SLO Post-Test 36 Week: April 25-May 27
 - (8) SLO Post-Test 18 Week: December 7-18, May 16-27

- n. OTHER
 - (1) ACCESS for ELs: January 19 – March 4
 - (2) GAA: September 1 – March 25
 - (3) Fitnessgram, students taking P.E. 1st-12th: Ongoing
 - (4) SLO Windows for 12 week courses (RMS only)
 - (a) Pre-Test: August 3-7, November 2-6, February 22-26

- (5) SLO Windows for 12 week courses (RMS only)
 - (a) Post-Test: October 26-30, February 8-12, May 20-27

3. Test Security and Integrity

- a. City Schools of Decatur places serious emphasis on the security and integrity of national, state, and local testing. Local test coordinators and examiners are fully trained on the security and integrity procedures found in The Georgia Department of Education's Student Assessment Handbook and the security and testing procedures published in state standardized testing manuals.

PREKINDERGARTEN – GRADE 5

II. Early Learning and Elementary School Progression

A. PreKindergarten-Grade 5

1. Overview

- a. PreKindergarten classes in City Schools of Decatur are lottery-funded. They have a maximum of 22 students with one certified teacher and one full-time paraprofessional.
- b. The prekindergarten classes in City Schools of Decatur use the Opening the World of Learning (OWL) framework to organize their classroom routines and curriculum. *OWL is a research-based and field-tested PreK curriculum designed to develop language and early literacy skills in the context of rich content while building a foundation in mathematics, science and social studies.* This framework builds independence and skills necessary to succeed in kindergarten classrooms and serves as an antecedent to success in later grades.
- c. Real Math Building Blocks PreK is a supplemental mathematics curriculum designed to develop young children's early mathematical knowledge through various individual and small- and large-group activities. It uses Building Blocks for Math PreK software, manipulatives, and print material. Real Math Building Blocks embeds mathematical learning in children's daily activities, ranging from designated math activities to circle and story time, with the goal of helping children relate their informal math knowledge to more formal mathematical concepts.
- d. Students that are enrolled in the CSD prekindergarten program on the last day of school will be enrolled at their zoned school for Kindergarten.

2. K-3 Overview: Expeditionary Learning

- a. Expeditionary Learning builds capacity to ignite each student's motivation, persistence, and compassion so they become active contributors to building a better world and succeed in school, college, career, and life.
- b. The innovative curriculum, teacher-created resources, and model of professional coaching and support are anchored by a vision of student success that joins academic achievement, character, and high-quality work.

3. Grades 4-5 Overview: International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Programme (PYP)

- a. The IB PYP prepares students to become active, caring, lifelong learners who demonstrate respect for themselves and others and have the capacity to participate in the world around them. It focuses on the development of the whole child as an inquirer, both within and beyond the classroom

B. Comprehensive Program

1. Requirements

- a. The comprehensive program for elementary school grades in the City Schools of Decatur reflects state and local requirements for elementary education and is aligned with the Georgia-required student curriculum.

2. Instructional minutes

- a. Student's instructional days meet and exceed state requirements for daily number of instructional minutes.

3. English Learners

- a. All students will have equal access to the appropriate instructional and intervention programs. Students will not be restricted because of limited English proficiency.

- b. An English learner (EL) is one whose native/first/dominant language is not English, and who is eligible for services in accordance with Rule 160-4-5-.02 Language Assistance: Programs for limited English proficient (LEP) Students. The federal government uses the designation LEP only for official documentation. In all other contexts, these students are referred to as English Learners.

c. Limited English Proficient

(1) All students who are eligible for and currently receiving ESOL services, including those receiving both ESOL and Special Education services.

(2) Students who qualify for ESOL each school year (as determined by required assessments), but whose parents have denied services (Parent Denials). These students will be retested in the spring of each year to continue to maintain the LEP status.

(3) K-3 students indicating English as a second language on the enrollment form will automatically be transferred to a school that can support their English needs. Once registered, ESOL testing will begin and services will be determined. If the student does not qualify for services, s/he have the option of remaining at that school or returning go to their home school at the end of the grading period.

d. Limited English Proficient – Monitored Students

(1) Students who test out of ESOL using the state-mandated testing and placement guidelines after being served in the ESOL program;

(2) Students who are exited after having been served in the City Schools of Decatur ESOL program;

(3) Students who tested out of ESOL or were exited within the last two school years in another US school. Documentation must be secured from the sending school or school district including dates of service, test scores, forms, etc.

(4) Students designated as LEP Monitored Status remain in this category for two academic years after exit from the ESOL program. At the end of the two-year period, they are no longer LEP or LEP Monitored. Students who are not eligible for ESOL program services per the results of the state mandated assessments (W-APT or ACCESS for ELs) are not coded LEP or LEP Monitored.

e. No Child Left Behind requires school districts to inform the parents of ELs with the following information on an annual basis:

(1) The reasons for identifying their child as ELL;

(2) The child's level of English language proficiency, how the level was assessed, and the status of the student's academic achievement;

(3) The methods of instruction used in the ESOL class in which their student will be participating;

(4) How the ESOL class in which their student is participating will meet their educational needs;

(5) How the ESOL class will specifically assist their student in learning English and meeting age-appropriate academic achievement standards for grade promotion and graduation;

(6) The specific exit requirements for the ESOL program, including the expected rate of transition from ESOL to a regular classroom, and the expected graduation rate for the student;

(7) The specific guidelines used in Georgia for promotion and retention;

(8) Notice within 30 days if the school fails to meet state objectives for its ESOL program;

(9) Information pertaining to parental rights that include written guidance on the parents' right to withdraw their student from

ESOL and the options they have to choose another program, if available.

- f. All ELL students must have an AIP in place.

C. Areas of Study

1. The following areas of study are required at each grade level:
 - a. Language Arts (reading, writing, speaking, viewing, listening)
 - b. Mathematics
 - c. Science
 - d. Social Studies
 - e. Physical Education and Comprehensive Health Education
 - f. Art
 - g. Music
 - h. Spanish
2. Modifications
 - a. The areas of study above may be modified to meet an individual student's academic needs.

D. Exceptional Student Services Program

1. See Section VI: Exceptional Student Services.
2. Learners labeled as gifted, see Section VI: Exceptional Student Services.

E. Participation in Statewide Assessment Program

1. State-required assessments
 - a. Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (GKIDS): Kindergarten
 - b. Georgia Milestones Assessments
 - c. ACCESS for ELs (English Learners)
 - d. Georgia Alternative Assessment (for some students with disabilities)
 - e. Georgia Physical Fitness Assessment (Fitnessgram): grades 1-5
2. Local assessments
 - a. Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)
 - b. Developmental Reading Assessment
 - c. Primary Spelling Inventory
 - d. Elementary Spelling Inventory

- e. DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency
- f. STAR Reading
- g. AIMS Web probes for at-risk students
- h. Observation Survey
- i. Oral Reading Fluency

3. Data

- a. Data is shared publicly to the Board of Education and disaggregated at the district, school, grade level, and classroom level to inform instruction.

F. Homework

1. District policy

- a. Homework is an integral part of the instructional program for all children. It should be an extension of the class goals and objectives. It should be designed to reinforce skills taught or to give students opportunities for application of class learning. Teachers of academic subjects are expected to assign homework on most school nights and are required to give feedback to students on all homework assignments.

2. Principals will be responsible for the following:

- a. Communicating the District policy on homework to staff members, students, and parents/guardians
- b. Reviewing the District homework policy with the total school staff
- c. Encouraging parents/guardians to communicate with the school if they feel student's homework assignment are excessive or not sufficiently challenging to the student
- d. Monitoring the implementation of the homework guidelines
- e. Emphasizing reading as an integral part of the school's homework policy

3. Teachers will be responsible for the following:

- a. Teaching independent study skills
- b. Making specific assignments
- c. Checking, reviewing, evaluating, and/or grading student homework, according to the teacher's individual methods, in keeping with a system that is clearly explained to the class
- d. Giving feedback on homework assignments in a timely manner
- e. Making instructions related to homework clear and providing guided practice when appropriate

- f. Encourage students to devote 30 minutes daily to reading as part of their homework assignment
 - g. Timely communication with parents regarding homework assignment concerns
4. Students will be responsible for the following:
- a. Completing assigned homework as directed
 - b. Returning homework to the teacher by the designated time
 - c. Submitting homework assignments which reflect careful attention to detail and quality of work
 - d. Devoting at least 30 minutes to reading as part of their homework assignment
5. Parents'/Guardians' responsibilities include the following:
- a. Taking an active role in the child's performance in school through encouragement and support of the child in the completion of the child's homework assignment, but not to include performing the child's work
 - b. Supporting the school in regard to the students being assigned homework
 - c. Requesting assignments for student in advance, when possible, for short term absences
 - d. Read to or encourage student to read for a period of at least 30 minutes each day as part of their homework assignment
 - e. Timely communication with the teacher regarding homework assignment concerns
 - f. It is understood that it is not the parent's/guardian's responsibility to have to give a great deal of assistance to the student in completing homework. Parents or other family members should, however, make every effort to read to students who cannot read on their own during the assigned homework period.

G. Make-Up Work

1. School-specific practice
 - a. Each school uses a practice appropriate to the grade levels they serve. Consult the school handbook for this school-specific practice.

H. Reporting of Progress

1. Work Sampling System

a. In PreKindergarten, the state-required Work Sampling System (WSS) is used. Information from the WSS is presented to families at family conference events twice during the year.

2. Progress Reporting

a. Standards-Based Report Cards will be issued for Grades K-5.

b. In elementary school, grades K through 5, progress will be reported six times during the school year at the end of each marking period.

(1) Report card to parents every 12 weeks (end of 2nd, 4th, and 6th marking periods)

(2) Parent/Teacher Conference at the end of 1st marking period

(3) MAP, Curriculum Night, and optional Conference at the end of 3rd marking period

(4) Student-led and/or Parent/Teacher Conference at the end of 5th marking period

c. Academic Scoring/Reporting

(1) N/A = Not Assessed

(2) 1 = Does not meet expectations of standards taught

(3) 2 = Approaching expectations of standards taught

(4) 3 = Meets expectations of standards taught

(5) 4 = Exceeds expectations of standards taught

d. Performance Level for behavior that promotes learning and Expeditionary Learning Habits of Scholarship (K-3)

(1) S = Strength

(2) D = Developing

(3) E = Emerging

e. Performance Level of IB Learner Profile/Specials/Effort (4th-5th grade)

(1) S = Strength

(2) D = Developing

(3) E = Emerging

3. Notices to Parents/Guardians

- a. Parent/guardian will be supplied with the following, as applicable:
 - (1) notification at any time during the grading period when there is a significant change in the student's achievement, effort and/or conduct
 - (2) notification of all state-wide and district wide tests at the elementary level
 - (3) notification when the student does not meet proficiency levels on statewide assessments in reading, writing, and mathematics and the opportunity to meet with school leaders to develop an individualized Academic Improvement Plan (AIP) to assist the student in meeting the expectations of proficiency.
 - (4) Parents of students with disabilities will be informed of progress at least as often as parents are informed of their non-disabled student's progress.

I. Academic Improvement Plans (AIP)

1. Assist struggling learners

- a. When required and in consultation with the parent, the school must develop and implement an AIP designed to assist the student in meeting state and district expectation for proficiency.
- b. The AIP shall also identify the desired levels of performance in the student's specific areas of weakness, and the instructional and support services to be provided to meet the desired levels of performance. Schools shall provide frequent monitoring of the student's progress.
- c. The AIP will serve as the documentation method for all support services, with the exception of 504 accommodation plans and IEPs through IDEA. School staff efforts to differentiate instruction at the Tier I level and provide different and/or more intensive interventions at the Tier II and III levels will be documented on the AIP, along with supporting data. All Response to Intervention functions and data will also be documented in the AIP. Finally, promotion/retention decisions will be documented in the AIP, as well.

2. Early Intervention Program (EIP)

- a. Students in grades K-5 not performing or maintaining academic grade level skills may qualify for support services through the Early Intervention Program (EIP).
- b. Identified students receive additional support to assist with reaching grade level performance. Students are to be served in an appropriate instructional model.
- c. Program Assurances

- (1) All EIP staff are certified – early childhood
- (2) A minimum of 45 minutes for grades K-3 and 50 minutes for grades 4-5 is defined as one segment. Students will receive services as many segments as necessary to support academic growth.
- (3) EIP Qualifying Criteria are being followed in identifying all students who are performing below grade level according to City Schools of Decatur at-risk determinants.
- (4) All EIP students served must have an AIP in place.
- (5) EIP models have been established to serve all students who qualify for services in reading and/or math. Instructional interventions have been designed to meet the needs of each individual student by providing accelerated, differentiated, and/or additional instructional resources to help students who are performing below grade level obtain the necessary academic skills to reach grade level performance in the shortest possible time.
- (6) EIP Exit Criteria are being followed.
- (7) Ongoing formative assessments that reflect individual student achievement gains throughout the academic school year have been established (e.g., AIMSWeb, MAP, writing samples, Oral Reading Fluency)

J. Student Progression

1. Definitions

- a. Accelerated instruction - challenging instructional activities intensely focused on student academic deficiencies in reading and/or mathematics; instruction designed to enable a student who has not achieved grade level to meet grade-level standards in the shortest possible time
- b. Additional instruction - academic instruction beyond regularly scheduled academic classes designed to bring students not performing on grade level to grade level performance; may include more instructional time being allocated during the school day, instruction before and after the school day, Saturday instruction, and/or summer/inter-session instruction
- c. Differentiated instruction - instructional strategies designed to meet individual student learning needs
- d. Grade level - standard of performance on a criterion-referenced competency test
- e. Placement - assignment of a student to a specific grade level based on the determination that such placement will most likely provide

the student with instruction and other services needed to succeed and progress to the next higher level of academic achievement

f. Placement committee - committee established by local school principal or designee to make placement decisions concerning a student who does not meet expectations on the state-mandated test; committee comprised of principal or designee, student's parent or guardian, and teacher(s) in the content area(s) in which the student did not achieve grade level on the state-mandated test

g. Promotion - assignment of a student to a higher grade level based on the student's achievement of established criteria in the current grade.

h. Retention - the re-assignment of a student to the current grade level during the next school year

2. Promotion Standards and Criteria

a. PreKindergarten students are promoted to Kindergarten unless, under the urging of a Response to Intervention (RtI) team or Individualized Education Plan team, another year in PreKindergarten is deemed appropriate.

b. Promotion or retention decisions are made by the Principal, teacher, and include parent input. Every effort is made to use multiple criteria before making such decisions.

c. Promotion standards for grades K-5 will be based on a consideration of the following:

(1) Teacher recommendation

(2) Parent recommendation

(3) Principal recommendation

(4) Reading placement test results (DRA)

~~(5) GMAS EOG results (grades 3-5)~~

(6) MAP results (grades K-5)

(7) Classroom performance

(8) Retention history

(9) Students are required to "meet" standards in two of the four core academic areas (ELA/Reading, Math, Science and Social Studies)

3. Retention and Placement

a. A teacher shall have the authority to recommend retention of a student in a given grade. Generally a student may not be retained more than once, and no student shall remain in Kindergarten more than two years.

b. ~~The school principal or designee may retain a student who performs satisfactorily on the GMAS EOG but who does not meet promotion standards and criteria established in this policy.~~ No student may be retained if s/he meets all academic promotion criteria.

c. Any student being considered for retention must be on an Academic Improvement Plan.

d. ~~Whenever a student in grades 3-5 fails the reading and/or mathematics portion of the state mandated test,~~ Whenever a student in grades K-5 is retained or placed on a student in grades 3-5 fails the reading and/or mathematics portion of the state mandated test, a written plan of action shall be developed. This plan will provide the student with an opportunity for accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction in order to perform at grade level at the end of the next school year.

e. If a student is not promoted, the student's academic record, as indicated by his report cards, must show over the year that the work was less than satisfactory. Non-promotion should not be a sudden decision, nor come as a surprise to the parent. The following process should be followed:

(1) A written deficiency notice should be mailed to the parent at the first indication of academic failure

(2) A request for a conference should be documented on Infinite Campus in the PLP

(3) If a parent does not respond to the request for a conference a follow-up should be made and documented in Infinite Campus

(4) If a child is being considered for retention documentation of two attempts for conferences should be made

(5) If after interventions per the AIP, the student continues to be considered for retention a second conference and/or third attempt for a conference will be made and the parent will be notified of possible retention

~~(6) Parents or guardians are to be notified by March 1 if their child is being considered for retention. The exception to this date is if a student fails the GMAS EOG.~~

~~(7) If a student fails GMAS EOG in 3rd or 5th grade, parents should be notified of consideration for retention within 10 days of receipt of GMAS EOG scores~~

f. Retained students should generally not repeat a grade with the same classroom teacher.

g. Limited English Proficient Students

(1) A student classified as Limited English Proficient (LEP) may not be retained due to the student's lack of English proficiency. Retention for reasons other than above must be considered by the ESOL teacher and the child's homeroom teacher. The parents must be invited to attend this meeting at which retention is being discussed. Meeting notification will be sent to parents in the home language when possible.

h. The building level Principal may administratively place students that do not meet promotion requirements. A placement plan will be developed and implemented for students that are administratively placed into the next grade level.

4. Additional Requirements for Grades 3 and 5

a. Promotion of a student shall be determined as follows:

(1) No third grade student shall be promoted to the fourth grade if the student does not ~~achieve grade level on the GMAS EOG in reading and~~ meet promotion standards and criteria established in this policy for the school that the student attends.

(2) No fifth grade student shall be promoted to the sixth grade if the student does not ~~achieve grade level on the GMAS EOG in reading and the GMAS EOG in mathematics and~~ meet promotion standards and criteria established in this policy for the school that the student attends.

b. ~~Requirements in this section shall apply to students in the following grade levels:~~

~~(1) The third grade beginning with the 2003-2004 school year; and~~

~~(2) The fifth grade beginning with the 2004-2005 school year.~~

c. ~~When a student does not perform at grade level in grades 3 and 5 on the GMAS EOG specified in section (a) above, within ten calendar days, excluding weekends and holidays, of receipt of the GMAS EOG individual student scores, the school principal or designee shall notify in writing by first class mail the parent or guardian of the student regarding the following:~~

~~(1) The student's below grade level performance on the GMAS EOG;~~

~~(2) The specific retest(s) to be given the student and testing date(s);~~

~~(3) The opportunity for accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction based on the student's performance on the GMAS-EOG; and~~

~~(4) The possibility that the student might be retained at the same grade level for the next school year.~~

d. ~~The student shall be given an opportunity for accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction in the applicable subject(s) prior to the retesting opportunity; and~~

e. ~~The student shall be retested with appropriate section(s) of the GMAS-EOG.~~

f. ~~When a student does not perform at grade level on the GMAS-EOG in grades 3 and 5 and also does not perform at grade level on a second opportunity to take the assessment, then the following shall occur:~~

(1) The school principal or designee shall plan to retain the student for the next school year except as otherwise provided for in this policy.

(2) The principal or designee shall convene the composition and functions of the placement committee; it shall describe the option of the parent or guardian, teacher(s), or principal to invite individuals who can provide information or facilitate understanding of the issues to be discussed to attend the placement committee meeting; and

(3) The notice shall include the requirement that the decision to promote the student must be the unanimous decision of the placement committee comprised of the parent or guardian, teacher(s), and principal or designee.

(4) The placement committee shall be comprised of the principal or designee, the student's parent or guardian, and the teacher(s) of the subject(s) ~~of the GMAS-EOG~~ on which the student failed to perform at grade level.

5. Promotion/Change of grade placement of retained students during the school year

a. A decision for promotion during the year for retained students can be made by the principal, considering the recommendation of the classroom teacher, with the permission of the parent/guardian, when the required grade level standards and expectations have been met. The student's permanent record card and report card will reflect the promotion/change of grade placement. A conference with the parent/guardian must be offered prior to change of grade placement.

6. Acceleration Procedure

- a. Any parent/guardian or teacher may refer a student to the Rtl Team to consider modifications to support the acceleration of content in the regular education classroom.
- b. As the Rtl Team continues to examine the interventions, a formal request for acceleration testing may be made.
- c. The child must be tested in reading and mathematics by someone other than the classroom teacher.
- d. An adapted version of the Iowa Acceleration Scale will be used to provide data to the Rtl Team to make a decision regarding acceleration.
- e. A mutual agreement must be reached by the following stakeholders: principal, parent/guardian, Rtl Team chair, school psychologist, reading/math consultant(s), current teacher, receiving teacher, social worker/counselor.

7. Promotion of the Exceptional Student

- a. Determination of the appropriate progression of the student enrolled in Exceptional Student Services will be based on acceptable progress toward the identified instructional objectives in compliance with the Individual Education Plan (IEP). The IEP team has the primary responsibility for determining each student's level of performance and ability to function academically at the next grade level subject to review by the principal. For additional information regarding approved programs of study for students served in exceptional student education, see the Exceptional Students Section of the Pupil Progression Plan.
- b. For a 3rd, 5th, or 8th grader who has an IEP and is identified through the state promotion/retention policy, the IEP team will serve as the placement committee.

K. Summer Learning

1. ~~Academic GMAS-EOG Remediation~~

- a. ~~City Schools of Decatur offers academic support for identified students who need additional support in their learning in the areas of reading and mathematics. Identification occurs in one or more of the following ways:~~

~~(1) Level I performance (failure) in reading on the grade 3 GMAS-EOG test, and reading or math on the grade 5 GMAS-EOG test~~

~~(2) Response to Intervention Problem Solving Team~~

~~(3) Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team (for students with identified disabilities)~~

b. ~~This academic support may happen during the school day in May or during days offered in June.~~

2. Enrichment

a. City Schools of Decatur may offer fee-based enrichment camps. The camps traditionally convene in June.

GRADES 6 – 8

III. Middle School Progression

A. Comprehensive Program

1. Requirements

a. The comprehensive program for elementary school grades in the City Schools of Decatur reflects state and local requirements for middle level education and is aligned with the Georgia-required student curriculum.

2. Instructional minutes

a. Student's instructional days meet and exceed state requirements for daily number of instructional minutes.

3. English Learners

a. All students will have equal access to the appropriate instructional and intervention programs. Students will not be restricted because of limited English proficiency.

b. An English learner (EL) is one whose native/first/dominant language is not English, and who is eligible for services in accordance with Rule 160-4-5-.02 Language Assistance: Programs for limited English proficient (LEP) Students. The federal government uses the designation LEP only for official documentation. In all other contexts, these students are referred to as English Language Learners.

c. Limited English Proficient

(1) All students who are eligible for and currently receiving ESOL services, including those receiving both ESOL and Special Education services.

(2) Students who qualify for ESOL each school year (as determined by required assessments), but whose parents have denied services (Parent Denials). These students will be retested in the spring of each year to continue to maintain the LEP status.

d. Limited English Proficient – Monitored Students

(1) Students who test out of ESOL using the state-mandated testing and placement guidelines after being served in the ESOL program;

(2) Students who are exited after having been served in the City Schools of Decatur ESOL program;

(3) Students who tested out of ESOL or were exited within the last two school years in another US school. Documentation must be secured from the sending school or school district including dates of service, test scores, forms, etc.

(4) Students designated as LEP Monitored Status remain in this category for two academic years after exit from the ESOL program. At the end of the two-year period, they are no longer LEP or LEP Monitored. Students who are not eligible for ESOL program services per the results of the state mandated

assessments (W-APT or ACCESS for ELLs) are not coded LEP or LEP Monitored.

- e. No Child Left Behind requires school districts to inform the parents of ELs with the following information on an annual basis:
 - (1) The reasons for identifying their child as EL;
 - (2) The child's level of English language proficiency, how the level was assessed, and the status of the student's academic achievement;
 - (3) The methods of instruction used in the ESOL class in which their student will be participating;
 - (4) How the ESOL class in which their student is participating will meet their educational needs;
 - (5) How the ESOL class will specifically assist their student in learning English and meeting age-appropriate academic achievement standards for grade promotion and graduation;
 - (6) The specific exit requirements for the ESOL program, including the expected rate of transition from ESOL to a regular classroom, and the expected graduation rate for the student;
 - (7) The specific guidelines used in Georgia for promotion and retention;
 - (8) Notice within 30 days if the school fails to meet state objectives for its ESOL program;
 - (9) Information pertaining to parental rights that include written guidance on the parents' right to withdraw their student from ESOL and the options they have to choose another program, if available.
- f. All EL students must have an AIP in place.

B. Area of Study

- 1. The following areas of study are required at each grade level:
 - a. Language Arts (reading, writing, speaking, viewing, listening)
 - b. Mathematics
 - c. Science (including Literacy Standards)
 - d. Social Studies (including Literacy Standards)
 - e. Spanish
 - f. Health/physical education
 - (1) The City Schools of Decatur Board of Education believes that many of the health problems experienced by children can be prevented through a comprehensive health and physical education program. The board further believes that a comprehensive health and physical education program will include appropriate administration for carrying out the program, adequate school health services, a healthful school environment, and comprehensive health and physical education instruction.
 - g. At least 90% of all 8th grade students are expected to earn 2 Carnegie Units. Students will earn .5 credit in Health, .5 credit in Personal Fitness and 1 unit in Spanish. The Health/Personal Fitness credits will count toward high school graduation requirements. The

Spanish credits will count as elective credits only and will not fulfill high school graduation requirements.

2. Modifications

a. The areas of study above may be modified to meet an individual student's academic needs.

3. Elective courses

a. Courses in business, art, band, chorus, and technology are offered.

b. Each student is required to take Spanish (either one quarter or year-long) each year.

c. A student who has not met minimum achievement levels on state or national assessment tests may be enrolled in additional courses in reading and/or mathematics.

4. Comprehensive Health Education

a. Comprehensive health education includes alcohol, tobacco and other drug prevention education, Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) communicable disease prevention, human growth and development, and personal health and hygiene.

b. A comprehensive sex/AIDS program is part of the curriculum in the City Schools of Decatur. Information explaining this part of the curriculum will be distributed annually. Included in this information will be procedures for reviewing the instructional materials and, if desired, procedures for excusing a student from this instruction. The school system wants to support parents in their role as the primary sex/AIDS educators of their children by providing a comprehensive sex/AIDS education program.

C. Exceptional Student Services Program

1. See Section VI: Exceptional Student Services.
2. Learners labeled as gifted, see Section VI: Exceptional Student Services.

D. Participation in Statewide Assessment Program

1. State-required assessments:
 - a. Georgia Milestones Assessments End of Grade 6-8
 - b. ACCESS for ELs (English Learners)
 - c. Georgia Alternative Assessment (for some students with disabilities)
 - d. Georgia Physical Fitness Assessment (Fitnessgram): grades 6-8
2. Local assessments
 - a. Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)
3. Data

- a. Data is shared publicly to the Board of Education and disaggregated at the district, school, grade level, and classroom level to inform instruction.

E. Homework

1. District policy
 - a. Homework is an integral part of the instructional program for all children. It should be an extension of the class goals and objectives. It should be designed to reinforce skills taught or to give students opportunities for application of class learning. Teachers of academic subjects are expected to assign homework on most school nights and are required to give feedback to students on all homework assignments.
2. Principals will be responsible for the following:
 - a. Communicating the District policy on homework to staff members, students, and parents/guardians
 - b. Reviewing the District homework policy with the total school staff
 - c. Encouraging parents/guardians to communicate with the school if they feel student's homework assignment are excessive or not sufficiently challenging to the student
 - d. Monitoring the implementation of the homework guidelines
 - e. Emphasizing reading as an integral part of the school's homework policy
3. Teachers will be responsible for the following:
 - a. Communicating a student's appropriate reading level (lexile) to parents.
 - b. Encouraging students to devote 30 minutes daily to reading as part of their homework assignment
 - c. Teaching independent study skills
 - d. Making specific assignments
 - e. Checking, reviewing, evaluating, and/or grading student homework, according a system that is clearly explained to the class as well as outlined in a course syllabus
 - f. Giving feedback on homework assignments in a timely manner
 - g. Making instructions related to homework clear and providing guided practice when appropriate
 - h. Communication with parents regarding homework assignment concerns in a timely manner
4. Students will be responsible for the following:
 - a. Completing assigned homework as directed
 - b. Returning homework to the teacher by the designated time
 - c. Submitting homework assignments which reflect careful attention to detail and quality of work
 - d. Devoting at least 30 minutes to reading as part of the homework assignment
5. Parents'/Guardians' responsibilities include the following:

- a. Taking an active role in the child's performance in school through encouragement and support of the child in the completion of the child's homework assignment, but not to include performing the child's work
- b. Supporting the school in regard to the students being assigned homework
- c. Requesting assignments for student in advance, when possible, for short term absences
- d. Reading to or encouraging student to read for a period of at least 30 minutes each day as part of their homework assignment
- e. Timely communication with the teacher regarding homework assignment concerns
- f. It is understood that it is not the parent's/guardian's responsibility to have to give a great deal of assistance to the student in completing homework. Parents or other family members should, however, make every effort to read to students who cannot read on their own during the assigned homework period.

F. Make-Up Work

- 1. School-specific practice
 - a. Each middle school team arranges this procedure. Each teacher allows for a period of time to make up work missed due to illness.

G. Reporting of Progress

- 1. Report Cards
 - a. In the middle school, grades 6 – 8, report cards shall be issued six times during the school year at the end of each reporting period.
- 2. Grading and Assessment
 - a. Introduction
 - (1) As part of our transition to becoming an International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (MYP), Renfro Middle School and Decatur High School sought to develop a shared, comprehensive assessment and grading policy that embodies the principles of IB as well as research-based principles for best practices in assessment and grade reporting. To that end, a committee of teachers, parents, IB coordinators, and administrators from both schools met for two days in July 2009 to review IB policy, Georgia Department of Education Guidelines, and research in assessment and grading in order to draft this document.

The International Baccalaureate Organization and City Schools of Decatur both value quality assessment as the cornerstone of effective teaching and learning. With the move to an IB framework, assessment in our schools will reflect the international-mindedness of the programme by allowing for assessments to be set in a variety of cultural and linguistic contexts.

In an effort to develop the whole student, we strive for assessment and reporting practices that are developmentally appropriate, that help to develop students' higher-order thinking skills, and that

encourage the application of knowledge, skills, and understanding of content in authentic ways. The guiding principles and a detailed description of our common assessment, grading, and reporting practices are contained in this document.

b. Underlying Principles of Assessment and Grading: At Renfro Middle School and Decatur High School, we believe that these principles should inform our practices in assessment and grading:

- (1) Assessment plans include measures of students' abilities to construct knowledge through tasks that are relevant to life outside of school.
- (2) Assessment plans incorporate a range and balance of assessment strategies, tools, and tasks used by teachers and students.
- (3) Pre-assessments are an essential part of every assessment plan.
- (4) Summative assessments are derived from learning targets and used to design meaningful instruction.
- (5) Summative assessments provide the primary evidence for determining grades.
- (6) Formative assessments are used throughout the learning process.
- (7) Assessment plans include opportunities for student reflection and metacognition.
- (8) Assessments are matched to learning targets, and clear criteria for mastery are established.
- (9) Assessments guide instruction, inform and enhance teaching, and encourage and support student learning.
- (10) Examples, models, or exemplars are provided to make assessment criteria clear and explicit for students.
- (11) Students have multiple attempts to master learning targets, and new evidence of learning replaces older evidence.
- (12) Feedback on student work is descriptive, timely, and ongoing.
- (13) Students are regularly involved in self-assessment and peer assessment.
- (14) Students are assessed multiple times throughout the year using IB rubrics (for IB MYP classes only).

c. Evidence of Student Learning: Assessment Strategies, Tools and Tasks

- (1) Throughout each unit of study, teachers collect evidence of student knowledge, skills, and understanding relative to the relevant Georgia Performance Standards and the IB objectives for each subject area. In collecting this evidence, teachers use a variety of **formative assessments** during the learning process to assist students in achieving learning goals for the unit. These may include both informal (e.g., direct observations, questions, class discussions, notes, checklists) and formal (e.g., quizzes, teacher conferences) assessments. At the end of a period of teaching and learning (a unit or a series of lessons) teachers use **summative**

assessments to determine student achievement in relation to the predetermined learning goals for that unit of study.

(2) Teachers use a variety of assessment strategies, including:

- (a) Observation
- (b) Selected response
- (c) Constructed response
- (d) Open-ended tasks
- (e) Performances
- (f) Process Journals
- (g) Portfolios

(3) Teachers develop a variety of suitable and appropriate assessment tasks specific to the unit of work, including:

- (a) Compositions—musical, physical, artistic
- (b) Creations of solutions or products in response to problems
- (c) Essays
- (d) Examinations
- (e) Questionnaires
- (f) Investigations
- (g) Research
- (h) Performances
- (i) Presentations—verbal, oral or written, and graphic—through various media

(4) Teachers use a variety of tools to collect evidence of student achievement in each unit of work, including:

- (a) Anecdotal records
- (b) Rubrics
- (c) Models/examples/exemplars
- (d) Checklists

d. Grading Practices

(1) MYP subject area teachers use IB rubrics including the 1-7 scale and descriptors. (for IB MYP classes only).

(2) Subject area teachers develop assessment plans based on learning objectives or learning targets and then determine which assessments will constitute grades in a unit before beginning instruction.

(3) Subject area teachers collaborate to determine what constitutes the different levels of proficiency and work to achieve rater reliability.

(4) Teachers record and provide feedback on multiple types of assignments but grades are predominantly assigned for summative tasks that accurately assess student mastery/performance.

(5) Teachers use standards-based grade books that report out students' scores on summative assessments but don't average those grades.

(6) Assignments are descriptively labeled in gradebooks in a user-friendly way. Generic terms such as "homework," "tests," or "vocabulary quiz #7" do not meet these criteria.

- (7) Teachers share learning objectives or learning targets with students and keep students apprised of their current levels of achievement.
- (8) Students have multiple attempts to master material and are not penalized for these multiple attempts.
- e. Grade Recording and Reporting
- (1) Subject area teachers collaborate to determine common gradebook categories that reflect IB objectives and/or Georgia Performance Standards for that subject area.
- (2) Summative or major assessments that will constitute the course grade will be listed in the gradebook at the beginning of the unit of study, along with the approximate completion dates for these assignments. Formative assessments may also be listed, but they do not factor into the final grade for a term.
- (3) If teachers choose to grade timeliness, completion of homework and classwork assignments, aesthetic quality, preparedness, on-task work, class participation and/or contributions to group work, these factors will be recorded in the non-academic category.
- (4) Teachers record an “INC” for incomplete or an “M” for missing (with no numeric values attached) in gradebooks to reflect summative or major assessments that students do not complete or do not turn in. A course grade of “INC” is reported at the six-week marking period to indicate incomplete or missing work that must be completed for the student to receive a grade in the course.
- (5) Reporting an “INC” on the report card at the six-week grading period requires prior documented parent contacts by the teacher, as well as prior implementation of a Tier I strategy and/or Tier II or Tier III interventions.

f. Grades 6-8 General Descriptors

Score	Descriptor
7	A consistent and thorough understanding of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them almost faultlessly in a wide variety of situations. There is consistent evidence of analysis, synthesis and evaluation where appropriate. The student consistently demonstrates originality and insight and always produces work of high quality .
6	A consistent and thorough understanding of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them in a wide variety of situations. There is consistent evidence of analysis, synthesis and evaluation where appropriate. The student generally demonstrates originality and insight.
5	A consistent and thorough understanding of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them in a variety of situations. The student generally shows evidence of analysis, synthesis and evaluation where appropriate and occasionally demonstrates originality and insight.
4	A good general understanding of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them effectively in normal situations. There is occasional evidence of the skills of analysis, synthesis and evaluation.
3	Limited achievement against most of the objectives, or clear difficulties in some areas. The student demonstrates a limited understanding of the required knowledge and skills and is only able to apply

	them fully in normal situations with support .
2	Very limited achievement against all the objectives. The student has difficulty in understanding the required knowledge and skills, and is unable to apply them fully in normal situations, even with support .
1	Minimal achievement in terms of the objectives.

g. Effort

(1) Effort reports are made every six weeks and accompany the academic grade.

Effort Rubric	
Value	Descriptor
1	Student is rarely self-directed, rarely displays initiative in his/her own learning and rarely exhibits accountability for his/her own work.
2	Student is sometimes self-directed, sometimes displays initiative in his/her own learning and sometimes exhibits accountability for his/her own work.
3	Student is usually self-directed, usually displays initiative in his/her own learning and usually exhibits accountability for his/her own work.
4	Student is consistently self-directed, consistently displays initiative in his/her own learning and consistently exhibits accountability for his/her own work.

3. Notices to Parents/Guardians

a. Parent/guardian will be supplied with the following, as applicable:

(1) Access to the Parent Portal: ongoing communication regarding student's academic success

(2) notification at any time during the grading period when there is a significant change in the student's achievement, effort and/or conduct

(3) notification of all state-wide and district wide tests at the middle grades level

(4) notification when the student does not meet proficiency levels on statewide assessments in reading, writing, and mathematics and the opportunity to meet with school officials to develop an individualized academic improvement plan to assist the student in meeting the expectations of proficiency.

(5) Parents of students being served through the Exceptional Student Services program will be informed of progress at least as

often as parents of students being served through the general education program.

H. Student Progression

1. Definitions

- a. Accelerated instruction - challenging instructional activities intensely focused on student academic deficiencies in reading and/or mathematics; instruction designed to enable a student who has not achieved grade level to meet grade-level standards in the shortest possible time
- b. Additional instruction - academic instruction beyond regularly scheduled academic classes designed to bring students not performing on grade level to grade level performance; may include more instructional time being allocated during the school day, instruction before and after the school day, Saturday instruction, and/or summer/inter-session instruction
- c. Differentiated instruction - instructional strategies designed to meet individual student learning needs
- d. Grade level - standard of performance on a criterion-referenced competency test
- e. Placement - assignment of a student to a specific grade level based on the determination that such placement will most likely provide the student with instruction and other services needed to succeed and progress to the next higher level of academic achievement
- f. Placement committee – Response to Intervention problem solving team established by local school principal or designee to make placement decisions concerning a student who does not meet expectations on the state-mandated test; this team will be comprised of principal or designee, student's parent or guardian, and teacher(s) in the content area(s) in which the student did not achieve grade level on the state-mandated test
- g. Promotion - assignment of a student to a higher grade level based on the student's achievement of established criteria in the current grade.
- h. Retention - the re-assignment of a student to the current grade level during the next school year based on the determination that such placement will most likely provide the student with instruction and other services needed to succeed and progress to the next higher level of academic achievement.

2. Promotion Standards and Criteria

- a. Promotion or retention decisions are made by the Principal, teacher, and include parent input. Every effort is made to use multiple criteria before making such decisions.
- b. Promotion standards for grades 6-8 will be based on a consideration of the following:
 - (1) Teacher recommendation
 - (2) Parent recommendation
 - (3) Principal recommendation
 - ~~(4) GMAS EOG results~~
 - (5) MAP results
 - (6) Classroom performance (achieving grade level standards in language arts, mathematics, science, social studies)
 - (7) Retention history
 - (8) Students are required to have a yearly average of 3 or higher in four of the five core subjects.

3. Retention and Placement

- a. A teacher shall have the authority to recommend retention of a student in a given grade provided that the teacher has ensured the student has been involved in the school's RtI process in which a problem-solving team has assisted with identifying an academic concern, developing appropriate interventions, and monitoring progress. Generally a student may not be retained more than once.
- b. The school principal or designee may retain a student who ~~performs satisfactorily on the GMAS EOG but who does not meet~~ promotion standards and criteria established in this policy.
- c. ~~Whenever a student in grades 6-8 is retained or placed or a student in grades 6-8 fails the reading and/or mathematics portion of the GMAS EOG,~~ a written plan of action shall be developed through the RtI process and documented on an Academic Improvement Plan (AIP). This plan will provide the student with an opportunity for accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction in order to perform at grade level at the end of the next school year. For these students, instruction shall be based on a plan of continuous assessment.
- d. Limited English Proficient Students
 - (1) A student classified as Limited English Proficient (LEP) may not be retained due to the student's lack of English proficiency. Retention for reasons other than above must be considered by the ESOL teacher and the child's homeroom teacher. The parents must be invited to attend this meeting at which retention is being discussed. Meeting notification will be sent to parents in the home language when possible.
- e. The building level Principal may administratively place students that do not meet promotion requirements. A placement plan will be

developed and implemented for students that are administratively placed into the next grade level.

4. Additional Requirements for Grade 8

a. Promotion of a student shall be determined as follows:

(1) Beginning with the 2005-2006 school year, no eighth grade student shall be promoted to the ninth grade if the student does not achieve grade level performance on the GMAS-EOG in reading and mathematics and meet promotion standards and criteria established in this policy for the school that the student attends.

b. When a student does not perform at grade level in grade 8 on the GMAS-EOG specified in section (a) above, within ten calendar days, excluding weekends and holidays, of receipt of the GMAS-EOG individual student scores, the school principal or designee shall notify in writing by first-class mail the parent or guardian of the student regarding the following:

~~(1) The student's below grade level performance on the GMAS-EOG;~~

~~(2) The specific retest(s) to be given the student and testing date(s);~~

~~(3) The opportunity for accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction based on the student's performance on the GMAS-EOG; and~~

~~(4) The possibility that the student might be retained at the same grade level for the next school year.~~

c. The student shall be given an opportunity for accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction in the applicable subject(s) prior to the retesting opportunity; and

d. The student shall be retested with appropriate section(s) of the GMAS-EOG.

e. When a student does not perform at grade level on the GMAS-EOG in grade 8 and also does not perform at grade level on a second opportunity to take the assessment, then the following shall occur:

~~(1) The school principal or designee shall plan to retain the student for the next school year except as otherwise provided for in this policy.~~

~~(2) The principal or designee shall convene the composition and functions of the placement committee; it shall describe the option of the parent or guardian, teacher(s), or principal to invite individuals who can provide information or facilitate understanding of the issues to be discussed to attend the placement committee meeting; and~~

~~(3) The notice shall include the requirement that the decision to promote the student must be the unanimous decision of the placement committee comprised of the parent or guardian, teacher(s), high school representative, and principal or designee.~~

~~(4) The placement committee shall be comprised of the principal or designee, the student's parent or guardian, and the teacher(s) of the subject(s) of the GMAS EOG on which the student failed to perform at grade level.~~

~~(5) A high school representative shall be invited to serve on the placement committee; notice of the date/time of the placement committee meeting shall be provided in writing at least three days in advance of the scheduled meeting.~~

(6) Students who are placed in 9th grade shall begin the school year with an AIP that has been developed with the support of an Rtl problem-solving team.

5. Promotion/Change of Grade Placement During the School Year

a. A decision for promotion during the year for retained students can be made by the principal, considering the recommendation of the classroom teacher, with the permission of the parent/guardian, when the required grade level standards and expectations have been met. The student's permanent record card and report card will reflect the promotion/change of grade placement. A conference with the parent/guardian must be offered prior to change of grade placement.

6. Promotion of the Exceptional Student

a. Determination of the appropriate progression of the student enrolled in Exceptional Student Services will be based on acceptable progress toward the identified instructional objectives in compliance with the Individual Education Plan (IEP). The IEP team has the primary responsibility for determining each student's level of performance and ability to function academically at the next grade level subject to review by the principal. For additional information regarding approved programs of study for students served in exceptional student education, see ESS Section of the Student Progression Plan.

b. For an 8th grader who has an IEP and is identified through the state promotion/retention policy, the IEP team will serve as the placement committee.

I. Academic Improvement Plans (AIP)

1. Assist struggling learners

a. When required and in consultation with the parent, the school must develop and implement an AIP designed to assist the student in meeting state and district expectation for proficiency.

b. The AIP shall also identify the desired levels of performance in the student's specific areas of weakness, and the instructional and support services to be provided to meet the desired levels of performance. Schools shall provide frequent monitoring of the student's progress.

c. The AIP will serve as the documentation method for all support services, with the exception of 504 accommodation plans and IEPs through IDEA. School staff efforts to differentiate instruction at the Tier I level and provide different and/or more intensive interventions at the Tier II and III levels will be documented on the AIP, along with supporting data. All Response to Intervention functions and data will also be documented in the AIP. Finally, promotion/retention decisions will be documented in the AIP, as well.

J. Summer Learning

1. Academic ~~GMAS EOG Remediation~~

a. ~~City Schools of Decatur offers academic support for identified students who need additional support in their learning in the areas of reading and mathematics. Identification occurs in one or more of the following ways:~~

- ~~(1) Level I performance (failure) in reading or math on the grade 8 GMAS EOG test~~
- ~~(2) Response to Intervention Problem Solving Team~~
- ~~(3) Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team (for students with identified disabilities)~~

b. ~~This academic support may happen during the school day in May or during days offered in June.~~

2. Study Skills

a. City Schools of Decatur may offer a study skills experience for middle grades (grades 5 – 8) learners. This experience supports students who may have failed science or social studies.

K. Alternative Options

1. Alternative Education Program

a. For students that have been recommended through tribunal to attend Alternative Education, a request is made to the DeKalb Alternative School to accept City Schools of Decatur students. The Memorandum of Agreement can be found on the CSD website with all PPP appendices.

b. Decatur High School makes this phone contact with the DeKalb Alternative School and informs the family of the timeline and procedures.

c. Procedure

- (1) The home school makes contact with the DeKalb Alternative School to check for space availability before tribunal.

- (2) If recommended to tribunal, the home school principal or principal's designee makes phone contact with DeKalb Alternative School.
- (3) The home school alerts the parents of date for the registration appointment at the DeKalb Alternative School.
- (4) The home school alerts parents of date to pick up the withdrawal packet from the school.
- (5) The home school monitors student progress for City Schools of Decatur students at established marking periods to ensure students are fulfilling requirements of tribunal resolution.
- (6) For tribunals taking place at the 160th school day and beyond, extended long-term suspension may be an alternative to the DeKalb Alternative School. In such cases, work will be provided to the student by the home school. Any exams will be taken after the scheduled exam dates.

GRADES 9 – 12

IV. High School Progression

A. Comprehensive Program

1. Requirements

a. The comprehensive program for elementary school grades in the City Schools of Decatur reflects state and local requirements for secondary education and is aligned with the Georgia-required student curriculum.

2. Instructional minutes

a. Student's instructional days meet state requirements for daily number of instructional minutes.

3. Full-Time Status

a. As per Policy IED: Scheduling for Instruction, students enrolled in grades 9-12 are required to carry seven Carnegie unit courses or their equivalents each semester during the regular school year.

b. Extreme cases may warrant an exception: see Full-Day requirement for students with disabilities.

4. English Learners

a. All students will have equal access to the appropriate instructional and intervention programs. Students will not be restricted because of limited English proficiency.

b. An English learner (EL) is one whose native/first/dominant language is not English, and who is eligible for services in accordance with Rule 160-4-5-.02 Language Assistance: Programs for limited English proficient (LEP) Students. The federal government uses the designation LEP only for official documentation. In all other contexts, these students are referred to as English Language Learners.

c. Limited English Proficient

(1) All students who are eligible for and currently receiving ESOL services, including those receiving both ESOL and Special Education services.

(2) Students who qualify for ESOL each school year (as determined by required assessments), but whose parents have denied services (Parent Denials). These students will be retested in the spring of each year to continue to maintain the LEP status.

d. Limited English Proficient – Monitored Students

(1) Students who test out of ESOL using the state-mandated testing and placement guidelines after being served in the ESOL program;

(2) Students who are exited after having been served in the City Schools of Decatur ESOL program;

(3) Students who tested out of ESOL or were exited within the last two school years in another US school. Documentation must be secured from the sending school or school district including dates of service, test scores, forms, etc.

(4) Students designated as LEP Monitored Status remain in this category for two academic years after exit from the ESOL program. At the end of the two-year period, they are no longer LEP or LEP Monitored. Students who are not eligible for ESOL program services per the results of the state mandated assessments (W-APT or ACCESS for ELs) are not coded LEP or LEP Monitored.

e. No Child Left Behind requires school districts to inform the parents of ELs with the following information on an annual basis:

(1) The reasons for identifying their child as EL;

(2) The child's level of English language proficiency, how the level was assessed, and the status of the student's academic achievement;

(3) The methods of instruction used in the ESOL class in which their student will be participating;

(4) How the ESOL class in which their student is participating will meet their educational needs;

(5) How the ESOL class will specifically assist their student in learning English and meeting age-appropriate academic achievement standards for grade promotion and graduation;

(6) The specific exit requirements for the ESOL program, including the expected rate of transition from ESOL to a regular classroom, and the expected graduation rate for the student;

(7) The specific guidelines used in Georgia for promotion and retention;

(8) Notice within 30 days if the school fails to meet state objectives for its ESOL program;

(9) Information pertaining to parental rights that include written guidance on the parents' right to withdraw their student from

ESOL and the options they have to choose another program, if available.

- f. All EL students must have an AIP in place.

B. Area of Study

1. The following areas of study are required prior to graduation:
 - a. Language Arts (reading, writing, speaking, viewing, listening)
 - b. Mathematics
 - c. Science (including Literacy Standards)
 - d. Social Studies (including Literacy Standards)
 - e. Physical Education and Comprehensive Health Education
 - f. Specified elective (Fine Arts, and/or Technology/Career Education)
 - g. World Languages
2. Modifications
 - a. The areas of study above may be modified to meet an individual student's academic needs.

C. Exceptional Student Services Program

1. See Section VI: Exceptional Student Services.
2. Learners labeled as gifted, see Section VI: Exceptional Student Services.

D. Participation in Statewide Assessment Program

1. State-required assessments:
 - a. End of Course tests (9th grade literature/composition, American literature, coordinate algebra, analytic geometry, biology, US history, economics): Grades 9-12
 - b. Georgia Alternative Assessment (for some students with disabilities)
 - c. Georgia Physical Fitness Assessment (Fitnessgram): grades 9-12
2. Local assessments
 - a. Measures of Academic Progress (MAP): Special Education and Title I students
 - b. SLO assessments in all courses without an End of Course test state assessment

- c. All students completing a CTAE pathway will sit for the DOE recognized End of Pathway Assessment.
- d. Work Ready Assessment: Grade 12

3. Data

- a. Data is shared publicly to the Board of Education and disaggregated at the district, school, grade level, and classroom level to inform instruction.

E. Homework

1. When assigning homework, teachers should think carefully about the purpose for the homework assignment. Typically, the purposes for homework fall into these broad categories:

- a. Practice – assigning students the opportunity to practice skills they've learned in class (e.g., solving math problems, using Quizlet to practice vocabulary in Spanish, practicing chemistry problems)
- b. Preparation – assigning students tasks that introduce content to be addressed in future lessons (e.g., reading a selection in a textbook on a topic for the next day's lesson, reading assigned pages of a novel to prepare for a Socratic seminar). Note: Homework should NOT be assigned to teach complex concepts or skills that students have not yet learned in class.
- c. Extension – assigning students tasks that ask them to use previously learned concepts and skills and apply them in some new way (e.g., writing a rough draft of an essay, completing a research presentation)
- d. DHS may also assign tasks outside the classroom that require students to complete work at home (e.g., Personal Project in tenth grade, Senior Project in twelfth grade, Extended Essay or Reflective Project in twelfth grade)

2. Time Commitment

- a. Students' total homework time commitment will range from 9-12 hours per week. Part of course preparation includes reading and studying notes, and students should commit a (significant) portion of this homework time to reading and studying for their courses.
- b. The daily time commitment is as follows: Ninth graders can expect homework from all subjects to total 90 minutes each school day. Up to 90 minutes of homework may be assigned over the weekends and school breaks. This time commitment will gradually increase as the student progresses through high school to a total across all subjects of 120 minutes per day, weekend, or school break.

Note: For students taking multiple college-level courses, the weekly time commitment will likely be greater than 12 hours, and the amount of homework will fluctuate depending on the nature of the course and time of year. The school will make it a priority to coordinate with teachers of college-level courses to ameliorate the impact of homework on students' schedules.

3. Responsibilities of Students, School and Home

Homework is an important interface between school and home. Learning at the high school level improves when students complete meaningful homework, so it is important for all stakeholders to understand their roles related to homework.

- a. Students will keep track of homework assignments, plan for time to complete them, and complete assignments in accordance with the school honor code.
- b. Parents will provide a place and resources for students to complete homework and support both the academic and honor code expectations for each assignment. This includes limiting support to what is generally allowed by the honor code and may be clarified by the teacher for a specific assignment. For example, if a student is completing a draft of an essay at home, the teacher may specify what, if any, feedback from others is appropriate.
- c. Teachers will design meaningful assignments that align with the purposes for homework identified in this policy and communicate assignments with enough advance notice to allow students to plan for completion of all assignments.
- d. The school will provide professional learning time for teachers to stay current with research related to homework practices and to coordinate with each other, so that assignments align with the time commitments identified in this policy.

F. Make-Up Work

1. School-specific practice
 - a. Each teacher allows for a period of time to make up work missed due to illness. It is the responsibility of the student to know the procedures in each classroom in which s/he studies.

G. Reporting of Progress

1. Report cards
 - a. In secondary school, grades 9 – 12, report cards shall be issued two times during the school year at the end of each semester and sent home to families.
2. Grading and Assessment Beliefs

a. We, the faculty and administration at Decatur High School, believe:

- (1) Frequent and rigorous assessment is central to designing quality instruction.
- (2) Clearly defined assessment criteria help students, parents, and teachers understand classroom expectations.
- (3) Summative assessments should provide the primary evidence for determining grades.
- (4) Students should be allowed multiple opportunities to demonstrate growth and mastery of learning targets.
- (5) New evidence of learning should be considered more accurate than old evidence.
- (6) Academic effort is important and should be reported.
- (7) Students should learn to manage their time and academic responsibilities.

b. To practically implement these beliefs we agree to:

- (1) Openly discuss assessment with students, helping them understand the purpose of assessments and how each assessment informs their overall grade.
- (2) Hold students accountable to deadlines.
- (3) Use measures other than a simple average to determine a student's level of achievement. These might include median, mode, and an examination of student growth, depending on the area and type of learning being assessed.
- (4) Use summative assessments and measures of student growth and achievement exclusively to determine a student's course grade.
- (5) Report effort using the Effort Rubric.
- (6) Use Middle Years Program (MYP) assessment criteria in MYP classes, Diploma Program (DP) assessment criteria and methods in DP classes, and clear assessment criteria in non-IB classes.

3. The DHS Grading Scale

a. All final course grades at Decatur High School will be given on the 1-7 scale. In MYP classes, MYP assessment rubrics will be used to score summative assessments and final grades will be determined using MYP boundary tables published each year in the MYP

Coordinator’s Handbook. In DP classes, teachers will model assessment scoring after DP practices and final grades will be determined by a weighted average that reflects DP procedures. In non-IB classes, summative assessments will scored using MYP or DP principles, as appropriate to the course.

b. The 1-7 grading scale converts to the A,B,C,F scale as follows:

IB Score	A-F Scale	Former Scale (No Longer Used)
7	A+	97-100
6	A	90-96
5	B+	85-89
4	B	80-84
3	C	70-79
2	F	65-69
1	F	60-64

Prior to this conversion, grades of 3 or higher in IB HL and AP courses will be increased by 1 point on the IB scale.

c. We will use the 1-7 scale internally to establish lists of class rank and to develop criteria for course admission and academic support eligibility. Class rank will be computed by averaging students’ weighted 1-7 grades.

d. Transcripts will list grades on the A-F scale to assure clarity in communication with other schools and colleges.

4. ~~Final Exams and End-of-Course tests (EOCs).~~

a. ~~Per Georgia DOE guidelines, EOCs will comprise 20% of a student’s grade for 9th, 10th, and 11th for the classes of 2015 and beyond and 15% for 12th graders, class of 2014. We will factor in EOCs using the following procedure:~~

b. ~~A student’s pre-EOC grade will be converted to the 60-100 scale using the following conversion table~~

Pre-EOC Grade	60-100 grade
7	100
6	95
5	89

4	85
3	79
2	69
1	65

c. ~~The student's grade will be multiplied by 0.8 and added to the EOC grade multiplied by 0.2. Grades will then be readjusted based on the following scale~~

EOC + Pre-EOC Grade	60-100 grade
95-100	7
90-94	6
85-89	5
80-84	4
70-79	3
65-69	2
<640	1

d. Cumulative assessments will comprise an appropriate portion of the overall assessments in each course. No single assessment may comprise more than one-fifth of a student's course grade. Final exams will not comprise a specific percentage of a student's grade. ~~except EOCs in EOC courses.~~

5. Effort Grading

a. We will use non-academic grades, which can include formative assessments and homework, when assessing student effort but will not use such assignments to determine a student's course grade.

b. We will score student effort at every grading period according to the rubric below.

c. We will appropriately follow up with students with consistently low effort scores (2 and 1 - Appropriate follow up could include a conversation with the student, in-class interventions, academic detentions, phone calls home, and/or a discussion with an appropriate administrator).

d. When a student fails to complete a major assignment during a grading period, they earn the lowest possible score for that assignment, and their effort score is also affected.

Level	Effort
4-Consistently	Student is self-directed, displays initiative in his or her own learning, and exhibits accountability for his/her own work.
3-Usually	
2-Some of the time	
1-Rarely	

6. Grade book set up

a. IB course grade books will contain categories that reflect the assessment criteria (MYP) or assessment types (DP) for the course. Grade books for non-IB courses will contain logical categories based on areas of assessment or units. Categories should be as descriptive as possible. Please see our Grading and Assessment FAQ at dhs.csdecatur.net for more detailed explanations and tutorials.

7. Assessment in Practice-Diploma Program

a. Teachers of Diploma Program classes should assess students in ways that parallel Diploma Program expectations. To do so, teachers in each subject will need to set grading boundaries on assignments and weights on categories that follow IB expectations. An example of how this process might work in a history class is presented below.

b. Determining Categories and Setting Category Weights

(1) The IB History curriculum focuses on knowing history, analyzing historical events, analyzing historical documents, and synthesizing conclusions from historical documents and is assessed through three papers (tests) and a historical investigation (research paper). Paper one uses a short-answer format to assess students' abilities to pull evidence from historical documents to form arguments. Papers two and three ask students to apply their knowledge to analyze historical events in extended-response (essay) questions. Papers two and three assess student thinking at the same level and in similar ways, but are over different content.

For example, paper one might ask: What, according to Source B, were the aims of the 1933-1934 purge of the Communist Party? Using these sources and your own knowledge, how far do you agree that Stalin's power in the late 1930's was due to his dominance of the Communist Party?

Papers two or three might ask:

Analyze the methods used to eliminate opposition by two single-party rulers, each chosen from a different region.

How and why did political change occur in either Argentina (1983-1995) or Japan (1945-1952)?

Our history team might decide, therefore, to have three categories in their grade books: Historical Knowledge and Analysis, Document Analysis and Synthesis, and Historical Investigation. IB's weights for the papers and historical investigation are:

Component	Weighting
Paper 1	20%
Paper 2	25%
Paper 3	35%
Historical Investigation	20%

Our history teachers could then decide to weight her their categories as:

Category	Weight
Historical Knowledge and Analysis	60%
Document Analysis and Synthesis	20%
Historical Investigation	20%

c. Scoring Student Work

d. Teachers in the IB Diploma Program should score work using rubrics or techniques that are similar or identical to IB Diploma assessment practices. All summative assessment scores should be reported on the 1-7 scale. Teachers can use IB subject reports and rubrics to help them set student expectations and score boundaries.

Again using history as an example, the previously mentioned teachers give a Document Analysis and Synthesis test. Before giving students the test, the teachers would need to set the number of marks (points) that each question counts for based on the relative difficulty and importance of each question. This might look like:

Question 1 5 marks

Question 2 6 marks

Question 3 6 marks

Question 4 8 marks

The total marks available for this question are $5+6+6+8=25$. The teachers would then set boundaries on this assignment, based on best practices for the Diploma Program. They would look to subject reports from

previous years and the relative difficulty of the question to set boundaries that might look like the following:

Score	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Range	0-2	3-5	6-8	9-11	12-14	15-17	18-25

Using these scores, the history teachers would then be able to assign each student a grade on the 1-7 scale.

Appropriate grade boundaries can vary significantly depending on the type of assessment. Consider, for example, the grade boundaries for history papers 1 and 3 for the November 2011 exam administrations.

Paper 1

Score	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Range	0-2	3-5	6-8	9-11	12-14	15-17	18-25

Paper 3

Score	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Range	0-6	7-13	14-18	19-24	25-31	32-37	38-60

One obvious difference between the two papers is the different number of possible marks (points). Looking closer, another important distinction emerges. A student needed $18/25=72\%$ of the total marks on paper 1 to score a seven, but needed $38/60=63\%$ of the total marks on paper 3 to score a seven. These similarities and differences raise two important points. First, teachers, students, and parents must detach from traditional percentage grades. Earning 90% of the marks possible on an assignment will often be too high a standard to set for excellence. Second, grade boundaries on assignments must be thoughtfully created by teachers and communicated to students and, when appropriate, parents. Using the same grade boundaries on multiple assignments may be necessary and correct, but such a practice should be carefully considered.

e. Determining Final Grades

(1) Final grades for the Diploma Program are determined by the results of externally assessed papers and internally assessed work that might include essays, reports, and practical work. Basing a student's high school grade on one or two end-of-year assessments, especially in 11th grade, would be inappropriate and teachers are, therefore, asked to use a standards-based approach to determining grades, where the standards in question are categories set up in the grade book. A grade given in a Diploma course should represent a teacher's evidence-based judgment of how a student would score on final IB assessments. Subject teachers should use a judgment technique appropriate to the

course and category. These judgment techniques could include looking at mean, mode, or student growth.

In our example history teachers' grade books, we might see the following categories, assignments, and scores for a particular student:

	Test One	Test Two	Test Three	Test Four
Historical Knowledge and Analysis	4	5	6	4

	DBQ One	DBQ Two	DBQ Three	DBQ Four
Document Analysis and Synthesis	3	4	3	5

Our history teachers might decide that the best prediction of a student's performance on the final IB assessments in Historical Knowledge and Analysis would be found by looking at the average of their scores in the category because these scores represent knowledge of a number of different historical eras. In this case, the student's average score is $4+5+6+4=19/19/4=4.75$.

For Document Analysis and Synthesis, the teacher might come to the conclusion that the best way to evaluate a student's achievement is to look at either growth or the most common score generated by the student, because the scores here represent student skill level, rather than distinct pieces of knowledge. Doing so in this case, we could assign this student either a 3 or 5, but would probably decide on the 5 because it represents the student's most recent score and gives him/her credit for growth in the skill.

To compute the final grade we'd simply take the weighted average of 4.75 and 5 using the category weights we found earlier. So,

$$(4.75 \times 3 + 5 \times 1)/4 = 4.81^*$$

Since the final grade must be on the 1-7 scale, this student would get a 5 for the term.

Grades in the IB Diploma Program are rounded to benefit the student. Therefore, any grade that is #.5 should be rounded up, rather than down. Rounding should only occur at the tenths place.

*In most classes at the end of the year teachers will have scores in every category and will be able to take a traditional weighted average. In this case, however, the 4.75 in HKA was multiplied by 3 to represent its weight compared to the 5 in DAS (60% vs. 20%). This calculation would be automatically completed by a grade book.

8. Assessment in Practice-Middle Years Program

a. Determining Categories

(1) Teachers of MYP classes should create grade book categories that are identical to the IB assessment criteria in their subject area. For example, in mathematics the categories should be Knowledge, Investigating Patterns, Communication, and Reflection.

b. Scoring Student Work

(1) Teachers of MYP classes must score summative student work using IB rubrics.

c. Determining Final Criteria Grades

(1) In accordance with IB assessment philosophy and practice, teachers should regularly evaluate a student's overall standing in each IB assessment criteria. Teachers will consider the grades in each criterion to make an overall summative judgment. Some criteria (ex: Communication) will lend themselves to examining growth, while considering the average or most common score in a category will be appropriate for others (ex: Knowledge). All teachers of a subject should agree on how each criterion will be evaluated. The final summative grade in all criteria must be a whole number. In cases where a teacher feels compelled to report a half integer, he or she should consider the student's most recent grades in rounding up or down.

d. Determining Final Overall Grades

(1) Final grades in the Middle Years Program are determined by teachers using boundary tables that are specific to a subject after the teachers summatively rate a student in each grading category criterion. Subject teachers should use a judgment technique appropriate to the course and category. These judgment techniques could include looking at mean, mode, or student growth.

Taking history as an example, suppose a student has the following summative ratings:

Category	Score
Knowledge	6
Critical Thinking	8
Investigation	4
Communication	6

The student's total score in history would be $6+8+4+6=24$

The MYP Boundary Table for Humanities is shown below:

Category	Score
1	0-3
2	4-7
3	8-12
4	13-17
5	18-22
6	23-27
7	28-32

Because this student achieved a total of 24 points, he/she would receive a final IB score of 6 for the course.

9. Assessment in Practice-Non-IB Classes

(1) Determining Categories

(a) Teachers of non-IB classes should create grade book categories appropriate to their subject area that help students and families understand a student's progress in each course. Non-IB teachers might choose to use units of content or types of assessment as grade book categories. Homework, class work, and other effort related assignments should not be scored as a part of a student's academic grade.

(2) Scoring Student Work

(a) All summative student assignments should be reported on the 1-7 scale, but different systems might be used to arrive at the 1-7 in different courses. A math teacher might, for example, expect students to reach different thresholds for total points to move up the scale, while an English teacher might create a rubric on a scale from 1-7. Escalating achievement on summative assessments should reflect increased expectations for higher-order thinking, rather than more evidence of the ability to work at the knowledge and comprehension level.

(3) Determining Final Grades

(a) Final grades in non-IB courses should be determined using standards-based techniques.

	Project One	Project Two	Project Three	Project Four
Use of Tools	4	5	6	4

	Project One	Project Two	Project Three	Project Four
Evaluation	3	4	3	5

In the example above, the graphics teacher might decide that the best evidence of a student's Use of Tools is the average of his/her scores in this area. In this case, the student's average score is $4+5+6+4=19/4=4.75$.

For evaluation, the teacher might come to the conclusion that the best way to evaluate a student's achievement in Evaluation is to look at either growth or the most common score generated by the student, because the scores her represent student skill level, rather than distinct pieces of knowledge. Doing so in this case, we could assign this student either a 3 or 5, but would probably decide on the 5 because it represents the student's most recent score and gives him/her credit for growth in the skill. All teachers of a subject should agree on how to summatively evaluate grading categories.

To compute the final grade we'd simply take the weighted average of 4.75 and 5 using the category weights established for the class. (See Assessment in Practice-DP for details)

Grades in should be rounded to benefit the student. Therefore, any grade that is #.5 should be rounded up, rather than down. Rounding should only occur at the tenths place.

10. Progress Reports

- a. Mailed after 6, 12, 24, and 30 weeks

11. Notices to Parents/Guardians

Parent/guardian will be supplied with the following, as applicable:

- (1) Notification at any time during the grading period when there is a significant change in the student's achievement, effort and/or conduct
- (2) Notification of all state-wide and district wide tests at the secondary level
- (3) Notification when the student does not meet proficiency levels on statewide assessments and the opportunity to meet with school officials to develop an individualized academic improvement plan to assist the student in meeting the expectations of proficiency.
- (4) Parents of students with disabilities will be informed of progress at least as often as parents are informed of their non-disabled student's progress.

12. Eligibility

- a. In order to be eligible to participate in any after school activities and athletics, a student must meet requirements of any of all of the following bodies: Georgia High School Association, State Board of Education, and the City Schools of Decatur Board of Education.

- (1) Students entering the ninth grade for the first time are automatically eligible to participate the first semester of

enrollment. After the end of the first semester of enrollment, students must be passing five of seven courses to remain eligible.

(2) First time tenth graders must have accumulated at least five Carnegie units in the first year of enrollment and must be passing five of seven courses at the end of first semester to remain eligible.

(3) First time eleventh graders must have accumulated at least eleven Carnegie units in the first and second years of enrollment and must be passing five of seven courses at the end of the first semester to remain eligible.

(4) First time twelfth graders must have accumulated at least seventeen Carnegie units in the first three years of enrollment and must be passing five of seven courses at the end of first semester to remain eligible.

H . Academic Improvement Plans (AIP)

1. Assist struggling learners

a. When required and in consultation with the parent, the school must develop and implement an AIP designed to assist the student in meeting state and district expectation for proficiency.

b. The AIP shall also identify the desired levels of performance in the student's specific areas of weakness, and the instructional and support services to be provided to meet the desired levels of performance. Schools shall provide frequent monitoring of the student's progress.

c. The AIP will serve as the documentation method for all support services, with the exception of 504 accommodation plans and IEPs through IDEA. School staff efforts to differentiate instruction at the Tier I level and provide different and/or more intensive interventions at the Tier II and III levels will be documented on the AIP, along with supporting data. All Response to Intervention functions and data will also be documented in the AIP. Finally, promotion/retention decisions will be documented in the AIP, as well.

I . Student Progression

1. Course Load Requirements for High School Students

a. Students enrolled in City Schools of Decatur schools, grades 9-12, are required to carry the equivalent of seven (7) Carnegie unit courses or their equivalents each year during the regular school year. Students who are participating in cooperative work-study programs, post-secondary options programs, joint enrollment programs, apprenticeships, or internships are allowed to leave campus for these programs.

b. Exceptions to the requirement to carry the equivalent of seven (7) Carnegie unit courses or their equivalents during the regular school year are as follows:

(1) A student who needs a waiver of the equivalent of seven (7) Carnegie unit course load requirement because of medical or family hardship may take a reduced number of courses. Decisions on waivers will be reviewed by the appropriate support team.

(2) Fifth year seniors who need three or fewer units (either semester) to meet graduation requirements are exempt from the requirement to carry a full course load.

(3) Students jointly enrolled in a post-secondary option program of study are considered full-time if they are enrolled in at least seven (7) Carnegie units.

(4) Secondary credit for postsecondary courses will be awarded according to the following conversion beginning in the 2010-2011 school year:

1-2 semester hour credits = .5 high school unit credit

3-5 semester hour credits = 1 high school credit

1-3 quarter hour credits = .5 high school unit credit

4-8 quarter hour credits = 1 high school unit credit

2. Graduation Requirements

For students entering the 9th Grade in 2009-2010:

<i>Required courses in italics</i>	
English/Language Arts 4 Units	<i>1 unit Ninth Grade Literature/Composition 1 unit American Literature/Composition 2 units English/Language Arts Core, including AP courses</i>
Mathematics 4 units	<i>1 unit Mathematics 1 or equivalent 1 unit Mathematics 2 or equivalent 1 unit Mathematics 3 or equivalent 1 additional unit Mathematics Core, including AP courses *See requirements for students with disabilities below *Under extenuating circumstances the building level Principal may allow successful completion of Math I, Math II, Math I Support, and Math II Support to count as completion of high school graduation mathematics core requirements.</i>
Science 4 units	<i>1 unit Physical Science or Freshman Physics or Physics 1 1 unit Chemistry 1, 1 unit Biology 1, 1 unit Science Core, including AP Courses</i>
Social Studies 4 Units	<i>1 unit Geography (.5) and 1 unit Citizenship (.5) 1 unit World History 1 unit US History 1 unit Economics (.5) and Social Science core (.5)</i>

World Language 2 units	2 units of the same world language
Career, Technical and Agricultural Education, Fine Arts or Approved Electives 3 units	Any approved courses in these areas
Physical Education and Health 1 unit	½ unit Personal Fitness ½ unit Health
Senior Project	*Under extenuating circumstances, the building Principal may waive the Senior Project requirement.
Electives 5 units	
Total number of required units 24	

For the diploma with distinction program, students must earn 26 units with a grade point average in the core courses of 3.0 or above on 4.0 scale weighted grade point average.

For students entering the 9th Grade in 2010-2011:

Required courses in italics	
English/Language Arts 4 Units	1 unit Ninth Grade Literature/Composition 1 unit American Literature/Composition 2 units English/Language Arts Core, including AP courses
Mathematics 4 units	1 unit Mathematics 1 or equivalent 1 unit Mathematics 2 or equivalent 1 unit Mathematics 3 or equivalent 1 additional unit Mathematics Core, including AP courses *See requirements for students with disabilities below Middle School students who earn Carnegie Units for math must still take a Carnegie Unit of math every year of high school
Science 4 units	1 unit Physical Science or Freshman Physics or Physics 1 1 unit Chemistry 1, 1 unit Biology 1, 1 unit Science Core, including AP Courses
Social Studies 4 Units	1 unit Geography (.5) and 1 unit Citizenship (.5) 1 unit World History 1 unit US History 1 unit Economics (.5) and Social Science core (.5)
World Language 2 units	2 units of the same world language
Career, Technical and Agricultural Education, Fine Arts or Approved Electives 3 units	Any approved courses in these areas Students must have a minimum of 0.5 credits in Fine Arts and Career Tech
Physical Education and Health 1 unit	½ unit Personal Fitness ½ unit Health
Senior Project	*Under extenuating circumstances, the building Principal may waive the Senior Project requirement.
Electives 5 units	

Total number of required units 25

For the diploma with distinction program, students must earn 27 units with a grade point average in the core courses of 3.0 or above on a 4.0 scale weighted grade point average.

For students entering the 9th Grade in 2011-2012:

<i>Required courses in italics</i>	
English/Language Arts 4 Units	<i>1 unit Ninth Grade Literature/Composition 1 unit American Literature/Composition 2 units English/Language Arts Core, including AP/IB courses</i>
Mathematics 4 units	<i>1 unit Mathematics 1 or equivalent 1 unit Mathematics 2 or equivalent 1 unit Mathematics 3 or equivalent 1 additional unit Mathematics Core, including AP/IB courses *See requirements for students with disabilities below Middle School students who earn Carnegie Units for math must still take a Carnegie Unit of math every year of high school</i>
Science 4 units	<i>1 unit Physics or equivalent 1 unit Chemistry, 1 unit Biology, 1 unit Science Core, including AP/IB Courses</i>
Social Studies 4 Units	<i>1 unit Economics (.5) and Citizenship (.5) 1 unit World History 1 unit US History 1 unit Senior Social Science Core, including AP/IB courses</i>
World Language 2 units	<i>2 units of the same world language</i>
Career, Technical and Agricultural Education, Fine Arts or Approved Electives 3 units	<i>Any approved courses in these areas Students must have a minimum of 0.5 credits in Fine Arts and Career Tech</i>
Physical Education and Health 1 unit	<i>½ unit Personal Fitness ½ unit Health</i>
Personal Project	<i>*Under extenuating circumstances, the building Principal may waive the Personal Project requirement.</i>
Electives 5 units	
Total number of required units 25	

For the diploma with distinction program, students must earn 27 units with a grade point average in the core courses of 3.0 or above on a 4.0 scale weighted grade point average.

For students entering the 9th Grade in 2012-2013 and beyond:

<i>Required courses in italics</i>	
English/Language Arts 4 Units	<i>1 unit Ninth Grade Literature/Composition 1 unit American Literature/Composition 2 units English/Language Arts Core, including AP/IB courses</i>
Mathematics	<i>1 unit Coordinate Algebra, Acc Coordinate Alg-Analytic</i>

4 units	<i>Geometry or Acc Math 2 or equivalent</i> <i>1 unit Analytic Geometry, Acc Analytic Geometry-Adv Algebra or Acc Math 3 or equivalent</i> <i>1 unit Adv Algebra or Acc Pre-Calculus or AP/IB course options or equivalent</i> <i>1 unit Pre-Calculus or AP/IB options or equivalent</i>
Science 4 units	<i>1 unit Physics or equivalent</i> <i>1 unit Chemistry,</i> <i>1 unit Biology,</i> <i>1 unit Science Core, including AP/IB Courses</i>
Social Studies 4 Units	<i>1 unit Economics (.5) and Citizenship (.5)</i> <i>1 unit World History</i> <i>1 unit US History</i> <i>1 unit Senior Social Science Core, including AP/IB courses</i>
World Language 2 units	<i>2 units of the same world language</i>
Career, Technical and Agricultural Education, Fine Arts or Approved Electives 3 units	Any approved courses in these areas Students must have a minimum of 0.5 credits in Fine Arts and Career Tech
Physical Education and Health 1 unit	<i>½ unit Personal Fitness</i> <i>½ unit Health</i>
Personal Project, Senior Project	<i>*Under extenuating circumstances, the building Principal may waive the Personal Project and/or Senior Project requirement.</i>
Electives 5 units	
Total number of required units 25	

For the diploma with distinction program, students must earn 27 units with a grade point average in the core courses of 3.0 or above on a 4.0 scale weighted grade point average.

** Students must pass a state required assessment in English Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies and Writing in order to graduate.

a. Definitions

(1) Carnegie unit - one unit of credit awarded for a minimum of 135 clock hours of instruction.

(2) Carnegie unit, summer school - one unit of credit awarded for a minimum of 120 clock hours of instruction.

(3) Core course - one of the courses in the areas of English, mathematics, science, social studies, or foreign language required for graduation by the state of Georgia and/or the local school system.

(4) Elective course - a course that a student may select beyond the core requirements to fulfill the Carnegie unit requirements for graduation.

(5) Dual enrollment – the participation of a student with a regionally accredited postsecondary institution wherein a student earns Carnegie units of credit that count toward high school

graduation requirements and post-secondary credit hours; these classes may or may not be at the high school. Included are Accel, Hope Grant, Gateway to College, move on When Ready, Articulation, Residential, Joint Enrollment

(6) Directed Study - A student may earn directed study elective credit with the approval of the directed study coordinator, the supervising teacher, and the administrative team.

(7) Special Education Courses - A student is staffed into special education programs by means of recommendations, test results, parental consent, and placement procedures.

(8) Special Education programs include the following: Behavior Disorders; Intellectually Disabled; Specific Learning Disabilities; Speech/Hearing Disorders; Vocational Rehabilitation Services.

(9) Programs of study - courses needed to complete requirements for the Technology/Career Preparatory Endorsement (T/CP) and/or the College Preparatory Endorsement (CP).

(10) Seal of endorsement - a seal/stamp approved by the Georgia Department of Education and affixed to high school diplomas by local school system staff for students who have satisfied specified requirements.

(11) Secondary School Credentials - documents awarded to students at the completion of the high school experience:

(12) High School Diploma Credential - document awarded to students certifying that they have satisfied attendance requirements, Carnegie unit requirements, and the state assessment requirements as referenced in Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-3-1-.07 (Testing Programs - Student Assessment). After satisfying the educational requirements for the Technology/Career Preparatory and/or College Preparatory Endorsements, seals shall be affixed to the diploma and/or transcript.

(13) High School Certificate of Attendance - document awarded to students who have not met state assessment requirements referenced in Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-3-1-.07 (Testing Programs - Student Assessment) but have met all requirements for attendance and Carnegie units.

(14) Career Pathways - Career pathways are state-approved career enhancement programs defined as a coherent, articulated sequence of rigorous academic and career related courses usually commencing in the ninth grade and leading to an associate degree, and/or an industry-recognized certificate or licensure, and/or a baccalaureate degree and beyond. Career, Technical and Agricultural Education (CTAE) provides all Georgia students with the opportunity to select at least three sequenced electives in a career pathway, along with recommended academic course

work, to prepare them to continue their education at any level or enter the world of work.

3. Required/Core/Elective Credit

a. Carnegie unit credit for core courses and graduation shall be awarded only for courses that include concepts and skills based on the Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE) or GPS for grades 9-12. Core courses taken as part of an individualized education plan shall receive core Carnegie unit credit.

b. Either elective course credit or no course credit shall be awarded for remedial courses in which instruction is based on GSE or GPS for grades K-8.

c. Core area courses successfully completed may not be repeated. If a scheduling error causes such repetition, elective credit only will be granted.

4. Areas of Study (Course Offerings)

a. Courses offered in the high school that shall earn Carnegie unit credit in English/language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, health/physical education, foreign languages, music, visual arts, drama, special education, and technology/career education are listed in Rule 160-4-2-.03.

5. Articulation Agreements

a. Articulation is a partnership agreement between a college and the high school system that provides an opportunity to earn college credit, through competency testing, for courses taken in high school that have been evaluated and determined as equivalent to Technical College courses.

b. Decatur High School has articulation agreements with Georgia Piedmont Technical College in various career technical areas.

6. Required Procedures for Awarding Carnegie Units of Credit

a. A Carnegie unit of credit for graduation shall be awarded to students in grades 9-12 for successful completion of courses of study based on the required hours of instruction provided during the regular school year or in summer school.

b. Carnegie units of credit for graduation shall be awarded to high school students participating in joint enrollment or postsecondary options (Rule 160-4-2-.34).

c. Schools shall accept student course credit earned in an accredited public or private school. These schools shall have been accredited at the time the credit was earned. Specific courses shall be determined to meet core curriculum requirements by evaluating course content. This evaluation shall be done by a school administrator or counselor.

Information about course content may be obtained from students, parents, and/or former schools. The appropriate EOC must be administered to receive graduation credit for required EOC courses. Credit will be granted when, in the judgment of the evaluator, the course substantially meets the requirements.

d. Equivalency credit will be shown on the student's transcript. A maximum of eight Carnegie credits may be transferred from other schools for each school year completed.

e. Schools shall not substitute courses and exempt students from the required secondary minimum core curriculum in the college preparatory and technology/career preparatory programs unless the student transferred from an accredited secondary school or the courses presented for credit meet criteria identified in these procedures.

f. The board of education authorizes the high school principal to grant Carnegie unit credit for learning that has occurred outside the 9-12 classroom on a student-by-student basis. A decision to award or exempt Carnegie unit credit in lieu of class enrollment shall be based on advisement by the high school administration, faculty, and/or counseling staff.

g. Such advisement shall include evaluation of the student's transcript for course equivalency and/or a proficiency test and/or actual classroom performance to determine mastered prerequisite skills. Equivalency credit shall be shown on the transcript.

h. In accordance with State Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.13 credit shall be awarded to students who reach the performance level of Exceeds on an EOC prior to taking the course. For example, a student may attempt the Biology EOC prior to taking the course. If the student reaches the performance level of Exceeds, the local board of education shall award the student the Biology course credit. Specific details relating to "testing out" are listed below.

7. Testing Out for Credit

a. A student may test-out of any course that has an associated EOC.

b. A student may only earn up to three credits by testing-out.

c. Students must meet the following requirements for earning course credit through testing out:

(1) Not currently or previously enrolled in the course;

(2) Have earned a grade of B or better in a content area course that is the same content area of the course for which the student is attempting the EOC.

(3) Received a teacher recommendation from a teacher in the same content area of the course for which the student is attempting the EOC

(4) Received parent/guardian permission if the student is less than 18 years of age.

(5) Eligible students are only allowed one opportunity per course to demonstrate subject area competency.

(6) Students who do not reach the performance level of Exceeds when attempting to test-out must enroll in and complete the associated course and retake the EOC even if the students make a passing grade on the EOC during the testing-out attempt, if the course is required for graduation; and

(7) The testing out option is available pending the implementation of a Georgia Department of Education EOC Testing Out assessment window.

8. Local Authorities and Responsibilities

a. The City Schools of Decatur Board of Education shall provide instructional, support, and delivery services. These services shall include, but are not limited, to the following:

(1) All secondary students will receive career and academic *advisement* from advisors, homeroom teachers, counselors, or other designees at least twice monthly to ensure that they follow a program that will enable them to meet graduation requirements and prepare for adult career interests. At least *one* annual session wherein students receive career and academic advisement will be documented with a dated record signed by the student, parents, and advisor. The school will provide a continuous guidance component beginning with the ninth grade with the following purposes:

- (a) Familiarize students with graduation requirements;
- (b) Help students identify the relationship of individual career objectives to the high school program of study they plan to follow; and
- (c) Provide annual advisement sessions to report student progress and to offer alternatives for meeting graduation requirements and career objectives.

(2) Record keeping and reporting services that document student progress toward graduation and include information for the school, parents, and students.

(3) Diagnostic and ongoing evaluation services that measure individual student progress in meeting competency expectations for graduation.

(4) Instructional programs, curriculum and course guides, and remedial opportunities to assist each student in meeting graduation requirements.

(5) Appropriate curriculum and assessment procedures for students who have been identified as having disabilities, which

prevent them from meeting the prescribed competency performance requirements. REF; O.C.G.A. 20-2-131; 20-2-140; 20-2-142; 20-2-150(a); 20-2-151(b); 20-2-154(a); 20-163; 20-2-281(b).

9. Other Requirements and Recommendations

- a. Students who complete the College Preparatory Seal of Endorsement may also receive the Technology/Career Preparatory Seal of Endorsement with at least four technology/career units earned, three of which must be concentrated in one of the following areas: Business Marketing and Information Management, Health Occupations, Family and Consumer Science, JROTC, Trade and Industrial, or School to Career (Class of 2011 only).
- b. Remedial courses count as elective credit only.
- c. Attendance requirements and graduation assessment requirements must also be met.
- d. Units for graduation shall be awarded only for courses approved by the Georgia Board of Education for grades 9 through 12. The Individualized Education Program (IEP) shall specify whether core courses taken as a part of an IEP shall receive core unit credit. IEP teams will refer to Rule 160-4-2-.48 in making decisions about mathematics courses. Students may consider an alternate math sequence if the following applies:
 - (1) The student is identified with a disability that affected mathematics achievement;
 - (2) ii. The student successfully earns course credit for Mathematics I and Mathematics II or GPS Algebra and GPS Geometry or GSE Coordinate Algebra and GSE Analytic Geometry; and
 - (3) iii. The student successfully earns course credit for at least two other state-approved mathematics courses, which may include, but not be limited to, Mathematics Support courses.
- e. The same course shall not be used to satisfy more than one unit requirement toward graduation.
- f. Courses that earn unit credit are listed in State Rule 160-4-2-.20, List of State-Funded K-8 Subjects and 9-12 Courses for Students Entering Ninth Grade in 2008.
- g. Unit credit shall be awarded to students participating in dual enrollment programs based on the requirements in policy IDCH, *Dual Enrollment Programs*.
- h. Unit credit shall be awarded to students who pass courses in the Georgia Virtual School based on the requirements of State Rule 160-8-1-.01. Online courses delivered by other providers must meet regional

standards of accreditation, align with the state curriculum standards and meet the minimum clock hour requirements listed above.

i. A student must earn a grade of 70 or higher to receive credit for a course toward fulfilling graduation requirements.

j. Students shall meet the graduation requirements in effect at the time of their enrollment in the 9th grade, regardless of changes in requirements affecting subsequent classes.

k. Students transferring from private schools, home study programs, or other states or countries shall meet the graduation requirements that apply to the cohort of students in the grade in which they enroll. The transcripts of transfer students for whom it is not possible to meet the Decatur City Schools graduation requirement by the end of the senior year shall be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

l. Students who officially withdraw from school and re-enroll in school at a later date shall be subject to the following requirements:

(1) Students returning to school after having been withdrawn from school for one academic year or more must meet the graduation requirements that apply to the cohort of students in the grade in which they re-enroll. However, if students have transferred from school to school but have been consistently enrolled, the original graduation criteria apply.

m. Students shall be promoted at the end of second semester or summer session of each year. Students shall not be promoted midyear. With the approval of the principal, a student may be moved from 11th to 12th grade at the end of 1st semester if the student can graduate during the same academic year.

~~n. 12th grade students will take the Georgia High School Graduation test in any subject area where they have not passed one EOC.~~

~~o. End of Course Tests (EOC) Retest Opportunities~~

~~(1) Students who pass the EOC test are not eligible for retest opportunities.~~

~~(2) If a student fails both the EOC course and the EOC test, they are not eligible for retest opportunities.~~

~~(3) If a student passes the EOC course but fails the EOC test, they will be eligible for one retest opportunity. In order to take advantage of the retest opportunity, students must attend a Principal approved remediation program. The score from the EOC retest will not be used to recalculate the final course average.~~

- p. Test accommodations for students with disabilities shall be provided as required in State Rule 160-3-1-.07 Testing Programs – Student Assessment.
- q. The following secondary school credentials shall be awarded:
- (1) High School Diploma - the document awarded to students who meet all attendance requirements, unit requirements and the state assessment requirements as referenced in Rule 160-3-1-.07 Testing Programs – Student Assessment.
 - (2) High School Certificate - the document awarded to students who meet attendance requirements and have earned 27 units but do not complete all other criteria for a diploma.
- r. Progress made by secondary students toward completion of high school graduation requirements shall be documented and reported to students and parents on a regular basis in the form of a progress report. The transcript shall serve as the official record. Paper transcripts are official only when embossed with the school's seal.
- s. Interventions and support for acceleration and enhancement shall be available to assist students in meeting requirements for graduation.
- t. Students are prohibited from substituting and exempting courses in the required minimum curriculum with exceptions listed below.
- u. Exceptions for Graduation for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities
- (1) Appropriate curriculum and assessment shall be provided for students with disabilities. Students with significant cognitive disabilities may graduate **and** receive a regular high school diploma when the student's IEP team determines that the student has:
 - (a) completed an integrated curriculum based on the GSE and/or GPS that includes instruction in Mathematics, English/Language Arts, Science and Social Studies as well as career preparation, self determination, independent living and personal care to equal a minimum of 23 units of instruction, **and**
 - (b) participated in the Georgia Alternative Assessment (GAA) during middle school and high school and earned a proficient score on the high school GAA test, **and**
 - (c) reached the 22nd birthday **or** has transitioned to an employment/education/training setting in which the supports needed are provided by an entity other than Decatur City Schools.
- v. Exceptions for Graduation regarding World Languages (Other than English)
- (1) Students whose native language is not English receive an exemption from the requirement by demonstrating proficiency in the native language pursuant to State Rule 160-4-2-.48. Students

who receive exemptions from this requirement shall substitute core courses for the two required modern language units.

(2) Students with documented educational plans, to include a plan developed through the Academic Intervention Team process, a 504 Plan and an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), upon determination through this process, may meet diploma requirements without completing two years of a World Language. Completing two years of a language other than English is an admissions requirement for entrance into a University System of Georgia four-year college or university and should be considered by the AIP, 504 or IEP team as this determination is considered.

w. Students Transferring from International Programs

(1) For credits earned at international education programs that are not compatible with American programs, a designation of P (Pass) will be used to show the assessment score on the transcript

x. Unit Credit in Middle School

(1) Transcripts may reflect the completion of courses offered in the middle school grades that meet the following criteria:

(a) The course must meet all 9 through 12 state curriculum standards.

(b) The transcript record for the course must include an End of Course Test (EOC) score as prescribed if an EOC is required by the Georgia Department of Education.

(c) The student must earn a grade of 70 or better.

(2) However, units earned in middle schools (with the exception of Health and Personal Fitness) shall not be counted toward the total required units for graduation. The unit(s) earned in middle school shall be posted on the high school transcript as pass/fail and shall be counted as elective units, but grades for these courses shall not be used to calculate grade-point averages for purposes of class rank or HOPE scholarship eligibility.

(3) Students who transfer from another school system which allows 8th grade credits to count toward graduation may use the credit to exempt specific course requirements if the principal or designee determines the Decatur City Schools graduation requirements may not be met without inclusion of these units.

y. Personal Fitness

(1) Personal Fitness courses coded as 36.5100 will include instruction in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and the use of an automated external defibrillator as required in O.C.G.A § 20-2-149.1.

10. Credit for College Courses

a. Dual Enrollment Programs

(1) Any eligible high school student may enroll full-time or part-time in approved credit-bearing college-level courses approved by the State Board of Education. Students do not need to be enrolled in a special program to be eligible for dual enrollment. Many career academies include dual enrollment opportunities. Specialized schools or programs, like Early College and residential programs, include dual enrollment options. The following programs are available to assist eligible high school students with college coursework taken through dual enrollment.

b. Definitions

(1) **Accel Program.** Accel is a non-need based grant program offered during the fall, winter, and spring terms of the school year for students that wish to take college-level (academic-only, degree-level) coursework for credit towards both high school and college graduation requirements. Eligible students must meet certain criteria included in the Eligibility section of this document. The Accel Program is funded by the Georgia Lottery for Education and administered by the Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC).

(a) Accel students may be enrolled part-time or full-time in college-level coursework.

(b) **NOTE:** All hours paid by the Accel program will be included in the combined paid-hours limit of 127 semester/190 quarter hours, which includes payments from the HOPE Scholarship, HOPE Grant and Accel programs. Once a student has been paid Accel or HOPE for 127 semester hours or 190 quarter hours, that student is no longer eligible to continue to receive HOPE or Accel payment.

(c) As stated above, hours paid under Accel will count against the 127 paid hour cap for the HOPE Scholarship, but college coursework taken by high school students before graduation with other fund sources (including Move on When Ready) will not count.

(2) **HOPE Grant Program.** The HOPE Grant program is a non-need based grant program, separate from the HOPE Scholarship, offered during the fall, winter, and spring terms of the school year at eligible high schools for Georgia residents seeking technical certificates or diplomas from TCSG and USG eligible postsecondary institutions. The Georgia Lottery for Education funds the Hope Grant program. The Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC) administers the program.

(3) **House Bill 149 (Move on When Ready)** provides an arrangement whereby an eligible student entering eleventh or twelfth grade who spent the prior school year in attendance at a public high school in Georgia may take all of his or her courses at or through an eligible institution or a virtual course approved by the State Board of Education and receive secondary credit from

his or her high school with the goal of completing graduation and high school diploma requirements. As with all dual enrollments, Move on When Ready (MOWR) students are enrolled in both the high school and the postsecondary institution and earn credits at both. Under HB149, dual enrollment funding for Move on When Ready students is provided through FTE, as arranged by the Department of Education.

c. Other Programs

(1) Early College is an initiative facilitated by the University System of Georgia (USG) in partnership with the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE). Early College schools allow identified students to participate in a dual enrollment program and to earn dual academic credit. This blended model targets students traditionally underrepresented in post-secondary education: high poverty, minority, and first-generation college with the goal of completing one to two years of transferable credit towards a Bachelors Degree or Associates Degree prior to graduating from high school. Participants enter Early College prior to the junior year of high school and in some cases as early as the sixth grade. Each Early College site is a partnership between a designated local school system and University System of Georgia institution. Tuition, fees, and books for approved Dual Academic Credit courses may be funded through the Accel Program operated by the Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC). Students must meet Accel Program criteria established by the Georgia Student Finance Commission and the postsecondary institution to be eligible for funding.

(2) Gateway to College. Gateway to College is a program that empowers identified youth who have already dropped out of high school or are not on track to graduate, but have the potential, to earn a diploma and dual enrollment credit in a supportive college environment. Gateway to College is located exclusively on a college campus and is site specific through local agreements between local school systems and colleges.

(3) Residential Programs. The University System of Georgia offers residential programs for gifted, talented, and motivated student at two institutions, the Advanced Academy of Georgia on the campus of the University of West Georgia and the Georgia Academy of Mathematics, Engineering and Science at Middle Georgia College. To participate in an early admission residential program a student must meet the approved high school GPA and SAT/ACT requirements of the program and any additional admissions requirements as defined by the institution. Students will be expected to enroll in, but not be limited to, courses that will satisfy high school graduation requirements. Students enrolling in a residential program may be eligible for Accel.

d. Definitions

(1) *ACCEL program* - a lottery-funded dual enrollment program administered by the Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC) that under rules promulgated by the GSFC provides for eligible juniors and seniors to take certain courses from postsecondary institutions that count for high school graduation credit *and* postsecondary credit.

(2) *Approved courses* - courses identified by the Georgia Department of Education that are eligible to be taken under dual enrollment programs.

(3) *Course* - instruction for which credit is awarded.

(4) *Credit* - units or portions of units earned and applied toward high school graduation and credit hours earned toward the completion of a postsecondary program of study.

(5) *Dual Enrollment* - a process through which high school students take courses from a state public or private postsecondary institution while still enrolled as a high school student and receive credit both at the high school and at the postsecondary institution.

(6) *Early College* - a program jointly operated by the State Board of Education and the Board of Regents that allows identified students to participate in a dual enrollment program prior to the 11th grade. (not offered at this time)

(7) *Eligible student* - a student who is accepted by a state public or private postsecondary institution and GSFC as meeting the requirements for participation in the lottery-funded dual or joint enrollment program.

(8) *Gateway to College* - a program jointly operated by the State Board of Education and the Board of Regents that allows identified students to participate in a dual enrollment program prior to the 11th grade. (not offered at this time)

(9) *Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC)* - the Georgia state government agency that administers postsecondary financial aid.

(10) *HOPE Grant* - the funding mechanism administered by the GSFC that under rules promulgated by the GSFC provides for eligible students to participate in diploma or certificate programs at public postsecondary institutions.

(11) *Joint Enrollment* - a process through which high school students take courses at a state public or private postsecondary institution while still enrolled as a high school student and receive credit only at the postsecondary institution. GSFC only provides funding for joint enrollment diploma or certificate courses taken at public postsecondary institutions through a Hope Grant.

(12) *Lottery-funded Dual Enrollment Programs* - programs that are provided to eligible high school students who are taking courses at state public or private postsecondary institutions paid for through lottery funds. These include the ACCEL program for college level coursework and HOPE Grant program for certificate or diploma coursework.

e. Requirements

(1) ACCEL

(a) Students who participate in this dual enrollment program shall adhere to the ACCEL guidelines as developed by the GSFC.

(b) Courses shall be chosen by eligible students from the list approved by the Georgia Department of Education developed with consideration of input from the Georgia Board of Regents.

(2) HOPE Grant Programs

(a) Students who participate in this dual or joint enrollment program shall adhere to the funding guidelines as developed by the GSFC.

(b) Programmatic guidelines for this program shall be developed by the Georgia Department of Education with consideration of input from the Georgia Department of Technical and Adult Education.

(c) Courses shall be chosen by eligible students from the list approved by the Georgia Department of Education developed with consideration of input from the Georgia Department of Technical and Adult Education.

(d) Credits earned through "testing out" will be part of the HOPE calculation.

(3) Special Dual Enrollment Programs

(a) Students accepted into Early College or Gateway to College or who participate in one of the full-time dual enrollment programs administered by the Department and the Board of Regents shall abide by the guidelines developed for those programs.

(b) Courses for special dual enrollment programs shall be chosen by eligible students from lists developed by the Georgia Department of Education for such programs with consideration of input from the Georgia Board of Regents.

(4) Non-Lottery Funded Dual or Joint Enrollment Programs

(a) Students who are not accepted by GSFC for participation in lottery-funded dual or joint enrollment programs but who have been accepted by a state public or private postsecondary institution are eligible to take the same courses identified for lottery funded programs.

(b) The student or the student's parent/guardian is responsible for all costs related to participation in a non-lottery-funded dual or joint enrollment program.

f. Awarding of high school credit for courses taken in dual enrollment programs

(1) City Schools of Decatur shall accept the postsecondary credit of a student who successfully completes an approved course at an eligible institution toward state and local high school graduation requirements and subject area requirements of the State Board of Education.

(2) The grades and amount of credit for each approved course for students who participate in approved dual enrollment programs shall be placed on high school transcripts and shall be used in computing grade point averages.

(3) Semester hour credit shall be converted to high school unit credit at the following ratio:

1-2 semester hour credits = .5 high school unit credit

3-5 semester hour credits = 1 high school credit

1-3 quarter hour credits = .5 high school unit credit

4-8 quarter hour credits = 1 high school unit credit

(4) Quarter hour credit shall be converted to high school unit credit at a 7.5 to one ratio: 8 quarter hours = 1.06 units; 7 quarter hours = .92 unit; 6 quarter hours = .79 unit; 5 quarter hours = .66 unit; 4 quarter hours = .53 unit; 3 quarter hours = .4 unit; 2 quarter hours = .26 unit; 1 quarter hour = .13 unit.

g. Local school system responsibilities

(1) City Schools of Decatur shall do the following:

(a) Require eligible students to meet state assessment requirements as referenced in State Board of Education Rule 160-3-1-.07.

(b) Require students who do not participate in one of aforementioned programs after they have enrolled to be assigned to high school classes.

(c) Provide students with information concerning the opportunity of dual and joint enrollment programs as part of the development of their plan of study. By April 1 of each school year or prior to enrollment in an eligible institution, high school counselors shall provide general information about lottery-funded program dual and joint enrollment programs to all eligible students.

(d) Provide advisement information to interested student (s) and parent(s) or guardian(s) which shall include:

(i) The names of eligible institutions, approved courses, information about approved academic transferable credit and local and state high school graduation requirements.

(ii) The name of a contact person at each eligible institution for information concerning the program.

(iii) Procedures for scheduling approved courses between the high school and the eligible institutions.

(iv) The potential effect of the program on a student completing a course and completing required high school graduation requirements.

(v) Consequences of course incompleteness, course failure, and the possible delay of high school graduation.

(vi) Eligibility information for participating in extracurricular activities.

(vii) The academic and social responsibilities of the student and parent(s) or guardian(s), including continuing responsibilities to obey the rules of both the eligible institution and the high school.

(viii) Prior to enrolling, require parent(s)/guardian(s) and the student who elects to participate to sign a form stating that they have received the advisement services specified and that they understand the responsibilities and possible consequences. Authority: O.C.G.A. 20-2-240.

11. Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate Diploma Program (IBDP)

a. A student will receive high school credit based on the grade received in the AP class.

b. To receive weighted credit, a student enrolled in an AP class is required to take the AP exam.

c. A student who is not taking an AP course may take the AP examination provided the student pays the examination fee. However, no high school credit will be granted for passing the AP examination.

d. Numerical averages for Advanced Placement courses will be increased by 5 on a 100 scale or 1.0 on a 4.0 scale, which will be reflected in the weighted GPA.

e. IB HL courses will be weighted in both the junior and senior years. IB SL courses will be weighted in the senior year only, except when students in the course take AP exams at the end of the junior year in the IB SL course.

12. Promotion from grade level to grade level

a. Students entering in 2008-2009

(1) From Grade 9 to 10: 5 credits, including one full credit each of required coursework for graduation in mathematics, science, social studies and English language arts.

(2) From Grade 10 to 11: 12 credits, including two full credits each of required coursework for graduation in mathematics, science, social studies and English language arts.

- (3) From Grade 11 to 12: 18 credits, including three full credits each of required coursework for graduation in mathematics, science, social studies and English language arts.
- b. Students entering in 2009-2010
 - (1) From Grade 9 to 10: 5 credits, including one full credit each of required coursework for graduation in mathematics, science, social studies and English language arts.
 - (2) From Grade 10 to 11: 11 credits, including two full credits each of required coursework for graduation in mathematics, science, social studies and English language arts.
 - (3) From Grade 11 to 12: 17 credits, including three full credits each of required coursework for graduation in mathematics, science, social studies and English language arts.
- c. Students entering in 2010-2011
 - (1) From Grade 9 to 10: 6 credits, including one full credit each of required coursework for graduation in mathematics, science, social studies and English language arts.
 - (2) From Grade 10 to 11: 12 credits, including two full credits each of required coursework for graduation in mathematics, science, social studies and English language arts.
 - (3) From Grade 11 to 12: 18 credits, including three full credits each of required coursework for graduation in mathematics, science, social studies and English language arts.
- d. Students entering in 2011-2012 and beyond
 - (1) From Grade 9 to 10: 6 credits, including one full credit each of required coursework for graduation in mathematics, science, social studies and English language arts.
 - (2) From Grade 10 to 11: 12 credits, including two full credits each of required coursework for graduation in mathematics, science, social studies and English language arts, successful completion of the Personal Project.
 - (3) From Grade 11 to 12: 18 credits, including three full credits each of required coursework for graduation in mathematics, science, social studies and English language arts.
- e. Students will be promoted to the next grade at the end of the academic year.

13. Valedictorian and Salutatorian

- a. Highest weighted average in senior class
- b. Must be enrolled at Decatur High School for the entire senior year
- c. No more than three classes may be dual enrolled classes at a location other than DHS
- d. Any transfer student must have courses from a high school that is fully accredited by a state or regional institution

J. Summer Learning

1. Credit recovery
 - a. Options may be offered during the school year and during in specific subject areas. Counselors will provide information for eligible students.
2. Academic summer school for Carnegie Units
 - a. DeKalb County Schools offer summer school options for a monetary fee. The school counselors distribute this information.

K. Online Learning

1. Online option
 - a. Elective and required course work can also be completed through Georgia Virtual School or another state approved online program. Georgia Virtual School serves as the approved online program for City Schools of Decatur. Parents are responsible for the cost of any course not taken at Decatur High School, not including Georgia Virtual School.

L. Alternative Options

1. Alternative Education Program
 - a. For students that have been recommended through discipline hearing to attend Alternative Education, a request is made to the DeKalb Alternative School to accept City Schools of Decatur students. The Memorandum of Agreement can be found on the CSD website with all the PPP appendices.
 - b. Decatur High School makes this phone contact with the DeKalb Alternative School and informs the family of the timeline and procedures.
 - c. Procedure
 - (1) Decatur High School makes contact with the DeKalb Alternative School to check for space availability before tribunal.

- (2) If recommended to tribunal, Decatur High School principal or principal's designee makes phone contact with DeKalb Alternative School.
- (3) Decatur High School alerts the parents of date for the registration appointment at the DeKalb Alternative School.
- (4) Decatur High School alerts parents of date to pick up the withdrawal packet from the school.
- (5) Decatur High School monitors student progress for City Schools of Decatur students at established marking periods to ensure students are fulfilling requirements of tribunal resolution.
- (6) For tribunals taking place at the 160th school day and beyond, extended long-term suspension may be an alternative to the DeKalb Alternative School. In such cases, work will be provided to the student by Decatur High School. Any exams will be taken after the scheduled exam dates.

K-12 SUPPORT SERVICES

V. K-12 Support Services

A. Response to Intervention (Rtl) Support Process

1. Description

a. Rtl is a flexible process in which schools provide timely assistance to each learner's level of need. This process is managed within a pyramid of interventions model that uses Rtl to organize school intervention services into four tiers or levels of support. Students with emerging difficulties in school are given universal support through Tier I that typically involves instructional differentiation by the classroom teacher. If that help is not sufficient, students are provided with additional supplemental support in Tier II with guidance from school-staffed decision-making teams. These teams may also determine that students who do not respond sufficiently to the Tier I and Tier II interventions receive even more intensive support at Tier III that is the Student Support Team process. Students who continue to demonstrate limited response to intervention in SST may be referred for a formal evaluation to determine if they are eligible for special education services or gifted services (Tier IV).

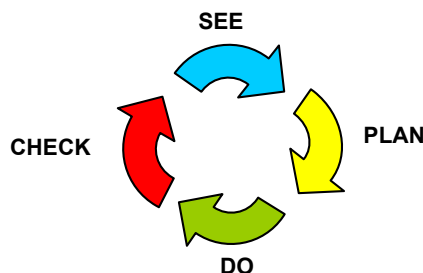
b. The City Schools of Decatur Response to Intervention Support Process utilizes a **problem-solving framework** and **data-driven decision making process** through each tier. Student performance data and progress monitoring data is utilized in each step of the problem-solving framework. This process consists of the following components:

See (...the learning problem, define the target skill)

Plan (...an intervention to address the target skill)

Do (...implement the intervention with fidelity)

Check (...assess the effectiveness of the intervention)



2. Tier I

a. Tier I focuses on standard-based classroom learning. All students participate in general education learning that includes implementation of the Georgia curriculum standards through research-based practices through the use of differentiation of instruction such as flexible grouping,

varied instructional strategies and monitoring of progress through multiple formative assessment and analysis of student work.

b. At any time during the school year, a student at the Tier I level may be designated “at risk.” The decision to designate a student “at risk” is based on the criteria for any one of the At-Risk Determinants. For any student designated “at risk” a Tier I Classroom Support Strategies and Documentations form is completed by the teacher (see Figure 1).

c. A primary at-risk determinant is universal screening. For students in grades Kindergarten through ten, the Measures of Academic Performance (MAP) will be administered three times during the year.

d. The Tier I Classroom Support Strategies and Documentations form is monitored by the teacher and an Rtl Team to determine the effectiveness of Tier I support efforts. The Rtl Team is responsible for decision-making as students move from tier to tier and oversees documentation efforts.

3. Tier II

a. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be notified of their writing of their student’s participation in a Tier II intervention.

b. Resources for identifying evidence-based interventions can be found in the RTI Toolbox that is in First Class under instruction. The CSD Matrix of interventions guides teachers to specific research based interventions and appropriate progress monitoring protocols that address the most frequently identified academic and behavioral skills. Files of the various interventions, as well as links to websites such as Intervention Central.org and Evidence-Based Intervention Network (ebi.Missouri.edu) are in the RTI toolbox for ease teacher and team access.

c. The provision of supplemental interventions to support needs-based learning is the focus of Tier II. The “at risk” student who did not demonstrate sufficient improvement at Tier I will receive interventions at this level that more intensively target a defined academic or behavioral need. The teacher and Rtl Team documents baseline data for the targeted need and begins a rigorous progress monitoring process through regular data probes. With these probes the teacher and Rtl team can determine how a student’s performance “trend line” compares to his “aim line,” which describes the expectation or goal for the identified skill over a designated period of time.

d. Tier II interventions may last six to 12 weeks, or even longer if good progress is reported. If little improvement is noted, even after three or four weeks, the teacher and Rtl Team may choose to adjust or replace the intervention. At the Tier II level all AIP documentation (see Figure 2) is conducted by the AIP Team.

4. Tier III: Student Support Team

- a. Students are moved to SST when efforts at Tiers I and II do not yield substantial improvement as determined by the Rtl Team. At SST the intensity of the academic or behavioral support intensifies. The support and interventions are much more individualized than at Tier II. Additional target skills may be defined, additional interventions implemented; the frequency or duration of interventions may be increased.
- b. The intensity of the interventions at Tier III is relative to the intensity of previous interventions at Tier II. Tier III is a more intensive level of support. Duration and frequency of intervention sessions is the decision of the Rtl Team. Again, all progress monitoring and documentation of AIP decisions is also the responsibility of the Rtl Team.
- c. When the teacher and Rtl Team meets at the SST level, the parent or guardian of the student must be notified and invited with the Parent Information and Meeting Notice (AIP 01). This form also includes a Consent for Informal Assessment, which addresses the use of vision and hearing screening, informal academic assessment, observations and behavior scales.
- d. In the event that behavioral concerns are noted, the team will provide all teachers who work with the student documents to collect behavioral data. The behavioral data will be used to develop a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) and Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP). The team will reconvene to review the FBA and BIP. The BIP will be implemented as a matter of practice when behavioral concerns are identified. The FBA and BIP will be developed as follows:
- (1) Teacher(s) define a target behavior. Teacher(s) collect data using the **Behavior Checklist** for no less than 10 school days.
 - (2) Teacher summarizes the data each day on the **Daily Data Collection Summary Sheet**.
 - (3) Data collection continues for at least 10 school days.
 - (4) Middle and High school teachers complete the **Classroom Behavior Profile Student Survey** (optional for younger students).
 - (5) Teacher(s) complete **Functional Behavior Assessment Questionnaire for School Staff**.
 - (6) Rtl/SST/or grade level team review and discusses data.
 - (7) Team uses all the collected information to complete the **Functional Behavior Assessment**.
 - (8) Team completes the Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) using research and resources such as:
 - (a) Intervention Central: www.interventioncentral.org
 - (b) Evidence Based Intervention Network: www.ebi.missouri.edu

- (c) *National Registry of Evidence Based Programs and Practices:* www.nrepp.samhsa.gov
- (d) www.behavioradvisor.com/oldindex.html

(9) BIP is reviewed with parent(s)/guardian and student.

5. Bypassing Rtl and SST Interventions

- a. Conditions under which Rtl/SST Bypass may be requested when:
 - (1) A student presents clear evidence of a severe disability and
 - (2) The use of only general education options would be non-productive or harmful to the student.
- b. Procedures for Requesting a Bypass:
 - (1) The Principal contacts the Director of Exceptional Education regarding the severity of the student's needs.
 - (2) The Principal and Director of Exceptional Education determine if a bypass is appropriate.
 - (3) A team meeting is held with the parent(s)/guardian, principal, general education teacher, special education teacher and Director or Coordinator of Exceptional Education to:
 - (a) Discuss conducting a psycho-educational evaluation
 - (b) Determine goals for the student's education during the evaluation.
 - (c) Determine a temporary placement for the student during the evaluation, including any related services that may be needed for the student to receive an education.
 - (d) The decisions of this team will be documented on the **AIP form** noting that Tier IV (special education) intervention is needed.
 - (e) The special education teacher will be responsible for collecting progress monitoring data on the identified goals for the student.
 - (f) The Central Review Team will be notified of the bypass.
- c. Bypass situation are extremely rare and all efforts should be taken to assure that the students have access to the full Rtl and SST process.

6. Tier IV

- a. When efforts at Tier III are determined by the SST to be unsuccessful, a referral for evaluation for special education or gifted services may be made. Students served at Tier IV are those who qualify for those services based on IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) or gifted assessment regulations.
- b. Possible referral
 - (1) When assistance through Tiers I, II of the Response to Intervention Support Process and the Student Support Team

Process has been thoroughly documented and yet problems are not resolved, sometimes it is appropriate to consider a referral to special education. This referral should clearly indicate how the student's needs cannot be met through documented academic and/or behavioral interventions. Documentation should include information on changes in performance and results of strategies recorded on the Academic Improvement Plan (AIP) form. The date that the SST Team recommended a referral to special education should be noted on the AIP form within the "Other Action Taken" section.

c. Special Education Referral

(1) If the Rtl team recommends a referral to special education, then the following forms should be included in the referral packet:

- (a) Academic Intervention Plan
- (b) Hearing and Vision Screening
- (c) Social & Developmental Questionnaire
- (d) Intervention data (academic, behavioral, speech/language)
- (e) Central Review Checklist

(2) The referral packet is sent to the Central Review Team:

(a) The Central Review Team is comprised of Pupil Services staff and ESS leadership.

(b) The Central Review Team meets weekly, or as needed, to review referral information assembled through the AIP process. Information is reviewed to ensure that sufficient strategies were attempted and data is appropriately documented.

(c) Guidelines for Central Review Meetings

(i) Data is presented at Central Review according to the following format:

(a) Identifying information

- (i) Name
- (ii) Age
- (iii) Grade
- (iv) Teacher
- (v) Family information

(b) Present performance

- (i) How is the student currently functioning academically and behaviorally?
- (ii) Most recent testing results
- (iii) Strengths
- (iv) Weaknesses
- (v) At-risk indicators

(c) Support History (explain decisions and data at each level with reference to guiding questions below)

- (i) *Is the chosen intervention research-based?*
- (ii) *Does the intervention target a specific skill?*
- (iii) *Is the targeted skill related to the referral concerns?*
- (iv) *Does progress monitoring measure the specific skill(s)?*
- (v) *Do progress monitoring results document continued concerns?*

(d) If the Central Review Team approves the referral packet, it is sent to the ESS Administrative Assistant who enters the referral information into the data system and creates a special education file for the student. The Administrative Assistant will then mail to parents/guardians the consent and parent rights forms:

- (i) Consent for Evaluation [2 copies]
- (ii) Consent for Evaluation Attachment
- (iii) Parental Rights in Special Education

(e) If the Central Review Team does not approve the referral, it is returned to the school coordinator with an explanation on the Central Review Checklist.

(f) A member of the Central Review Team will meet with the school level Student Support Team to:

- (i) Review the student's progress monitoring data
- (ii) Support the team in identifying target skills, interventions to address those skills, and data collection to monitor progress.

(3) Parents or guardians will sign and return both copies of the Consent for Evaluation and return one copy to the Administrative Assistant at the Central Office. When the Consent for Evaluation is returned indicating consent, the Administrative Assistant will forward the referral packet to the staff who will conduct evaluation (school psychologist, speech and language pathologist or preschool assessment team). If consent is denied, the referral packet will be returned to the SST Team chair.

d. Parent Request for Evaluation

(1) If a parent requests an evaluation for their child, and the school Rtl team has not recommended an evaluation, then the parent must contact the ESS Director to state their request.

(2) The ESS Director will provide a Parent Request for Evaluation Form that the parent will complete and return to the ESS Office.

(3) Upon receipt of the Parent Request for Evaluation form, the ESS Director and Central Review Team will review the requests.

- (a) If an evaluation for special education is needed, a Consent for Evaluation packet (including the consent form, description of types of evaluations, and parent rights) will be sent to the parent to complete. The due process timeline will begin on the date that the Consent for Evaluation form is returned to the ESS Office.
- (b) If an evaluation for special education is not needed, the ESS director will send the parent: Prior Written Notice to document that the system refuses to evaluate and the basis for this decision along with Parental Rights.

e. Special Education Feedback to SST

(1) Outcome

- (a) Following the evaluation, the evaluator (school psychologist or speech/language pathologist) will communicate the eligibility and placement decision results to the AIP team.
- (b) The SST will record the appropriate information.
- (c) If the student is ineligible for ESS services, the IEP Committee may make recommendations for continuing the AIP Plan.

B. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

1. Introduction

- a. The purpose of this manual is to provide a plan for the implementation of Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act.

2. Background

- a. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 provides protection against discrimination on the basis of one's disability. The regulations of the Act can be found at 34 CFR Part 104.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 requires that:
No otherwise qualified individual with disabilities in the United States...shall, solely by reason of his or her disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance or activity conducted by any Executive agency or by the United States Postal Service. (29 USC §794)

Section 504 of the Act requires an analysis of student needs in comparative terms. That is, with respect to those things required of non-disabled students appropriate accommodations shall be provided certain students when required. Therefore, the process of identifying students and determining necessary accommodations are to be viewed as regular education functions.

3. Terminology

a. **IDEA** refers to the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act** which is the federal law that governs the provision of 'traditional' special education and related services.

b. A **PROGRAM** or **ACTIVITY** includes all programs and/or activities conducted or sponsored by the school district including those activities funded and not funded by federal funds. The definition of program or activity should be extended to include:

(1) Contracts the school district enters into the provision of certain services, student bus transportation for field trips, etc., and,

(2) Contracts the school district enters into for which other individuals or agencies use its facilities.

c. **HANDICAPPED PERSONS** are those who have "a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment" [34 CFR § 104.3(j)]. A physical or mental impairment means (i) any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the following body systems: neurological; musculoskeletal; special sense organs; respiratory, including speech organs; cardiovascular; reproductive, digestive, genitor-urinary; hemi and lymphatic; skin; and endocrine; or (ii) and mental or psychological disorder, such as mental retardation, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities. A physical or mental impairment may be any of the disability conditions under the IDEA or other non IDEA impairments. Conditions primarily the result of cultural, environmental or economic factors may not be considered disabling conditions under Section 504 [similar to IDEA exclusions]. Individuals who have been previously regarded as disabled under IDEA may be disabled under Section 504, e.g., students formerly classified under the IDEA but who have been misclassified or declassified. To be eligible under Section 504, a person must have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the **major life activities**.

The above listed mental and physical impairments are not exhaustive. In addition, Section 504 **excludes** the following conditions from qualifying a student as disabled: substance abuse disorders resulting from illegal use of drugs, kleptomania, pyromania, exhibitionism, voyeurism, gender identity issues not resulting from physical impairment, or other sexual disorders. [See Americans with Disabilities Act]

d. **MAJOR LIFE ACTIVITIES (MLA)** have previously included caring for one's self, doing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, **learning**, and working. Amendments to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) redefine major life activities to also include eating, sleeping, standing, lifting, bending, reading, concentrating, thinking and communicating. A substantial limitation in only one of the life activities is all that is needed to be considered disabled under Section 504.

e. **QUALIFIED HANDICAPPED PERSON**, with respect to public preschool, elementary, secondary or adult education services, means a handicapped person (i) of an age during which non-handicapped persons are provided such services, (ii) of any age during which it is mandatory under state law to provide such services to handicapped persons, or (iii) to whom a state is required to provide a free appropriate public education under section 612 of the Education of the Handicapped Act. [34 CFR § 104.3(l)].

f. **FREE APPROPRIATE EDUCATION (FAPE)**

City Schools of Decatur shall provide a free appropriate public education to each qualified handicapped person who is in its jurisdiction, regardless of the nature or severity of the person's handicap. The provision of an appropriate education is the provision of regular or special education and related aids and services that (i) are designed to meet individual educational needs of handicapped persons as adequately as the needs of non-handicapped persons are met, and (ii) are based upon adherence to procedures that satisfy the requirements of the Section 504 regulations relating to educational setting, evaluation and placement and procedural safeguards. [34 CFR § 104.33(a)-(b)].

g. **DISCRIMINATION PROHIBITED** No qualified handicapped person shall, on the basis of handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity which received Federal financial assistance. [34 CFR § 104.4(a)].

Qualified students may not be **denied participation in or benefit from** services which are afforded non-disabled students. The opportunity to participate in, or benefit from the aid, or services must be equal to and as effective as that afforded to non-disabled persons.

Discriminatory actions prohibited by the Act include, without limitation: (1) sponsoring activities, or renting facilities to organizations that exclude the disabled and (2) denying individuals with disabilities the opportunity to enjoy any right, privilege, or advantage enjoyed by other non-disabled individuals. See 34 CFR § 104.4 for more comprehensive list of prohibited discriminatory actions.

h. **CURRENT 504 PLAN** is defined as a 504 plan that is less than three years old.

4. School-Site Procedures

a. Child-Find Procedures

(1) In addition to City Schools of Decatur's child-find activities (see Section III), each school within the District will take steps to identify and locate qualified disabled persons who are not receiving an appropriate education. [34 CFR § 104.32 (a)]. This requirement may be satisfied through faculty awareness and the screening procedures used by each school's staff to locate

students suspected of being disabled. Activities used to satisfy the IDEA child-find requirements also satisfy the Section 504 child-find requirements which include active efforts on behalf of all staff and special education staff to make school personnel aware of the characteristics of children with disabilities and includes public announcements and postings about City Schools of Decatur Child-Find screenings.

(2) School Child Find Activities will include but not be limited to:

- (a) Education at faculty meetings on the child find requirements.
- (b) Universal screening procedures at each school

- (i) Review of MAP data

- (ii) Review of other classroom assessments (DRA, Spelling Inventories, DIBELS, etc.

- (c) Review of enrollment forms and documents for medical or other information indicating a disability.

- (i) School nurse or teacher will contact parent to discuss the needs of the student.

- (ii) Principal will be informed of the issue

- (iii) The Director of Exceptional Student Education and Pupil Services, School level 504 coordinator or school psychologist will be informed as appropriate.

- (d) Teacher Direct Report

- (i) If a teacher observes characteristics of a disability in a student in his/her class, they will inform their Principal.

- (ii) The Principal call the Director or Coordinator of Exceptional Education to observe the student.

- (iii) If the student displays a severe disability, SST by pass will be discussed.

- (iv) If the suspected disability is not severe, Exceptional Education staff will provide consultation and support the development of interventions through the RTI process

(3) Community IDEA Child find Activities

- (a) Private Schools attend a meeting in the fall to learn about the Rtl process and child find requirements. They are provided with:

- (i) A contact person in the Exceptional Education office

- (ii) Copies of the AIP form

- (iii) Procedures for the Rtl process and referral process

- (b) Advertisements in local publications occur throughout the school year with contact information for the Exceptional Education Administrators.

- (c) Regular communication with birth to 3 year old providers facilitates collaboration with Babies Can't Wait.

b. Teacher Awareness

(1) It is important that teachers understand the general requirements for IDEA and Section 504 referrals. All teachers should also be aware of their obligations to implement instructional and behavioral accommodations for students who are IDEA and Section 504 disabled.

(2) City Schools of Decatur strives to support all students at their level of need. Students' academic and behavior performance is continuously monitored to determine if adequate progress is made. When students are determined to be "at-risk" in any performance area, an Academic Improvement Plan (AIP) is developed and support through the City Schools of Decatur Response to Intervention Process is initiated. Section 504 referrals may arise when attempts to address academic and/or behavioral difficulties through the AIP are unsuccessful, and there is evidence of, or reason to suspect, a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. A Section 504 referral can arise even when the AIP process is not engaged if there is reason to believe the student has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity. In some instances, data collected over time will trigger a reason to suspect a disability, and additional evaluative data is sought. At other times, parents may provide the school district with diagnostic information that verifies the existence of a disability. There are also a number of student events that may trigger a referral for an evaluation to determine eligibility for accommodations under Section 504. These events are occasions when the existence of a disability may be considered and do not, in and of themselves, qualify an individual for Section 504 services. These events are simply occasions that might prompt a referral:

- (a) When a student exhibits chronic discipline problems;
- (b) When a student is evaluated and found ineligible for special education under IDEA;
- (c) When a student returns to school after a critical illness or injury;
- (d) When a student exhibits a persistent health problem;
- (e) When the student receives prescription medication at school.

c. Referral process

(1) A referral for Section 504 services often emerges through involvement with the City Schools of Decatur Response to Intervention Process. For example, an AIP Team may make the determination that a student's current situation merits consideration through Section 504, through academic or behavioral data collected over time and/or psychoeducational evaluation and subsequent ineligibility for special education services.

(2) The principal of each school building, or his or her designee, serves as the building Section 504 coordinator, who facilitates all Section 504 referrals.

d. Evaluation Process

(1) An evaluation must be conducted prior to establishment of eligibility for services under Section 504. Parental consent must be obtained prior to performing an evaluation of any student. If a parent does not wish to have his/her child evaluated for Section 504 eligibility, City Schools of Decatur will honor that wish. Often, this evaluation consists of consideration of previously gathered diagnostic information, such as medical or psychological reports by licensed professionals. Evaluation for IDEA consideration may also be used for addressing Section 504 eligibility if the student is determined not eligible for special education services.

e. School Evaluation

(1) Schools do not have the resources necessary to assess all physical or mental impairment covered by Section 504. For example, school nurses can provide recommendations for care and accommodation of a severe medical condition, but they cannot independently diagnose such a condition. Similarly, qualified school psychologists may assess current levels of educational achievement, cognitive processing deficits or disorders, or learning, behavioral, and developmental difficulties, or *screenings* to identify characteristics of mental or emotional disorders, such as depression or behavioral manifestations such as ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder). In none of their assessment, however, are school psychologists qualified to independently diagnosis a medical condition. If the 504 Team determines that further evaluation (including, but not limited to, medical evaluation) is required to determine eligibility, then the school system is responsible for obtaining further evaluation.

f. Physician Recommendation for Placement

(1) Under Section 504, schools are not required to place children based solely upon recommendations of physicians. The Section 504 coordinator should seek consent to release information from the parent to consult with the physician. Information from physicians as well as other outside sources should be included with all other data collected to determine a student's eligibility.

g. Parent Involvement in 504

(1) Parents are always invited to be a member of their child's 504 Team and to participate in Section 504 meetings, and such invitations must be documented. Under Section 504, schools are not required to provide evaluations of children based solely upon parental suspicion or demand (OCR Memorandum, Clarification of Evaluation Responsibilities, undated). Rather, if parents believe their child has a disability and the school has reason to believe

that the child needs special education or related services, the school must provide evaluations, and/or consider medical evaluations, to determine whether the child is disabled.

(2) The parent may not compel the school district to develop an accommodation plan under Section 504 if the student is eligible for an IEP (Individualized Education Program) (OCR: 12/31/1996).

h. Due Process Evaluation Recommendations

(1) If a student is determined eligible under IDEA, an IEP describing appropriate special education services will be developed for the student. If the child is eligible for services under IDEA and the parents reject such services, the parents are also rejecting the school's Section 504 offer as well. When the student is eligible, the IDEA IEP satisfies the Section 504 obligation.

(2) It shall be the practice of The City Schools of Decatur Schools not to duplicate services and/or accommodations through both Section 504 and IDEA. Conversely, a student with a Section 504 accommodation plan is not eligible for an IDEA IEP.

i. The Section 504 Team

(1) The 504 Team at the school level will be assembled by the principal as the building 504 coordinator, or by his or her designee, and shall be comprised of school staff who are familiar with the student, i.e., teachers, counselor, nurse, etc., as well as the building school psychologist, the parent, and others as appropriate.

j. Temporary Disabilities

(1) Impairments are not necessarily excluded from the definition of "disability" simply because they are temporary. Duration, expected duration, or impairment are factors that may be considered in determining whether or not the impairment substantially limits a major life activity. Temporary impairments, such as a broken leg, which do not require accommodations for access to a building or classrooms or which do not interfere with learning activities, are not usually regarded as disabilities. The question of whether a temporary impairment is a disability must be resolved by the Section 504 Team on a case-by-case basis taking into consideration both the duration (or expected duration) of the impairment, and the extent to which it actually limits a major life activity of the affected individual.

(2) For conditions that may be considered temporary (such as burns, broken limbs, short term illness, etc), the Section 504 Team, may proceed directly to determining eligibility and the development of an accommodation plan.

k. Exclusions from 504

l. Transferring a 504 Plan

(1) When a student transfers from another system to a City Schools of Decatur with an existing 504 plan, the building 504 coordinator will review the existing plan, will consult as necessary with other system staff, and determine whether a new evaluation needs to be conducted to determine eligibility and a subsequent accommodation plan.

(2) 504 Plans of City Schools of Decatur students shall be transferred to the proper school upon a student's matriculation from Pre-K to elementary school to middle school and to high school.

m. Guidelines Regarding 504 Plans and Health/Safety Plans

(1) Any time there is knowledge of a physical condition that affects a student's access to the curriculum, provision of a 504 plan may be considered. When considering a 504 plan for certain health conditions, the 504 building coordinator and the school nurse should consult about the need for a 504 plan. Students with physical or mental conditions that do not constitute disabilities under Section 504 may require an individualized health care plan, which should be discussed with the school nurse.

(2) Decision making guidelines are provided below for the more prevalent conditions that might require a 504 plan:

(a) Asthma

(i) Considerations: What is the severity of the asthma diagnosis?

(a) Mild— symptoms include breathlessness but can walk and lie down, can speak in sentences, respiratory rate normal or slightly increased, no retractions (neck), and no wheezing.

Determination of Disability Unlikely

(b) Moderate—symptoms include breathless when talks and prefers sitting, speaks in phrases, increased respiratory rate, subtle but present retractions (neck) and possibly loud wheezes. Symptoms occur requiring inhaler more than once a week. **Determination of disability possible**

(c) Severe—symptoms include breathless and hunched forward, speaks only in words, respirations greater than normal rate, retractions (neck) present. Symptoms occur more than once a week requiring inhaler or nebulizer treatment in nurse's office and/or dismissal.

Determination of disability likely

(b) Severe Allergy

(i) Considerations: What is the severity of the allergic reaction?

(a) Mild—history of mild response i.e. itching, watery eyes, vomiting usually upon ingestion of food or contact with allergen (bee sting). Treated with oral antihistamine, no epi-pen required.

Determination of disability unlikely

(b) Severe—history of severe response on contact with allergen (ingestion not required) including swelling of face, lips, throat, tightness in chest, loss of consciousness. Prevention of threat of allergic response requires continuous and immediate availability of epi-pen.

Determination of disability likely

(c) Diabetes

(i) Considerations: How often does student require glucose monitoring and insulin injections?

(a) If either are required during the school day **determination of disability likely.**

(d) Seizures

(i) Considerations: What is the frequency and intensity of seizure activity?

(a) Controlled (or extremely rare) - never seizure activity at school, seizure free for significant period of time (greater than a year).

Determination of disability unlikely

(b) Moderately controlled - breakthrough seizures either at home or school within past year. **Determination of disability possible**

(c) Frequent seizures or uncontrolled - e.g. medication in the school. **Determination of disability likely**

(e) Other conditions for consideration in consultation with the nurse

(i) Examples: HIV/Aids, sickle cell, cardiac conditions, and other physical or mental conditions impacting access to the curriculum either permanently or temporarily.

n. Eligibility Determination Sequence

(1) Eligibility under Section 504 is dependent upon the existence of an impairment that substantially limits a major life activity as compared to the condition, manner, or duration under which the average person in the general population can perform the same major life activity. In other words, a person who is handicapped under Section 504 is unable to perform a major life activity that the

average person in the general population can perform under normal conditions.

(2) In order to determine eligibility for Section 504, the Section 504 Team must collect information from a variety of sources in order to answer certain problem-solving questions. Following this sequence requires a thorough accumulation of evaluation data that must be carefully considered and documented. The process is thoughtful and deliberate, but targeted and responsive.

(3) ADA also requires that disability determinations be made without regard to mitigating factors such as medication, medical supplies, appliances, low-vision devices (except eyeglasses and contact lenses), prosthetics, hearing aids, and mobility devices.

(4) Questions to ask:

(a) ***Does the student have a mental or physical impairment?***

The Section 504 team must consider an evaluation report, diagnosis, or physician report that documents the mental or physical impairment. A parent report of the impairment without supporting documentation may not be sufficient to verify the existence of either mental or physical impairment.

(b) ***Does the impairment affect a MLA (Major Life Activity)?***

The impairment must limit a major life activity. Academic and behavioral data must be collected. Data should be collected from a variety of sources, including, but not limited to, formal and informal assessments, teacher recommendations, physical condition, social or cultural background, and adaptive behavior. In addition, information which describes how the student learns, e.g., time needed to complete learning activities and assignments, ability to focus, etc., may be useful.

(5) At the conclusion of the questioning sequence, the Section 504 Team is in a position to determine if the student is disabled as defined by Section 504 and is eligible for Section 504 accommodations. If the student is eligible, the team writes an accommodation plan. Notice of Section 504 Rights are provided to the parents regardless of the eligibility determination.

o. Section 504 Accommodation Plan

(1) Once a student is determined eligible under Section 504, the 504 Team develops an accommodations plan. The building Section 504 coordinator shall take steps to ensure that parents are afforded an opportunity to participate in the development of the plan. This plan shall be reviewed at least annually.

(2) Completing the Accommodation Plan

(a) The Section 504 Accommodation Plan consists of two primary sections. The first section documents the existence of an impairment that affects a major life activity and the basis for an eligibility determination. The second section documents accommodations required for the student to have fair and equal access to facilities and curriculum, as well as individuals responsible for providing the required accommodations. Copies

of completed and signed plans are kept in a confidential school file, and at the central office.

(3) Testing Accommodations

(a) Accommodations are changes in the administration of an assessment in terms of how the student takes or responds to the assessment. Broad categories of accommodations include presentation, response, setting, and scheduling.

(b) Accommodations do not change the construct intended to be measured by the assessment or the meaning of the resulting scores. Accommodations are designed to provide access and equity for students with disabilities, not advantage. When used appropriately, they reduce or even eliminate the effects of a student's disability; they do not reduce learning expectations. The accommodations provided to a student must be the same for classroom instruction, classroom assessments, and state assessments. It is critical to note that although some accommodations may be appropriate for instructional use, they may not be appropriate for use on a standardized assessment. There may be consequences (e.g., invalidating a student's test score) for the use of some accommodations during state assessments. It is very important for educators to become familiar with state policies regarding accommodations during assessments.

(c) In Georgia, accommodations may not alter, explain, simplify, paraphrase, or eliminate any test item, reading passage, writing prompt, or answer option. Further, accommodations may not provide verbal or other clues or suggestions that hint at or give away the correct response to the student.

(d) Typically, accommodation use does not begin and end in school. Students who use accommodations will generally also need them at home, in the community, and as they get older, in postsecondary education, and at work. Accommodations for instruction and assessment are integrally intertwined. However, some accommodations are appropriate for instruction and not assessment. (adapted from the Georgia DOE Accommodations Manual)

(e) When necessary, ESS case managers, 504 coordinators and ELL staff may develop testing accommodations as part of individual student plans, but in accordance with the accommodations definition above. Those monitoring student plans must be mindful of accommodation needs in all aspects of instruction and not only for assessment.

(f) For any system required testing (MAP, Georgia Milestones, etc, ~~GMAS EOG, GHSWT, etc.~~) new accommodations must be added to individual student plans (IEP, 504 or ELL) prior to 30 calendar days before the scheduled test. Staff is encouraged to always consider the need for any special instructional and testing accommodations as plans are developed or reviewed.

(g)

(h) Typically, 504 accommodations do not include alternate schedules for time at school. Student's instructional days meet state requirements for daily number of instructional minutes. However, in rare cases where physical or mental impairments compromise a student's ability to tolerate a full school day, the 504 plan may detail an alternate or part-time daily schedule.

(4) Annual Review

(a) The 504 Team will perform an annual review of each 504 Plan. The purpose of the annual review (which is separate and distinct from a reevaluation-discussed below) is two-fold: (i) to allow new teachers and staff to become familiar with the 504 Plan, and (ii) to consider whether any changes to the Plan might be necessary.

(5) Eligibility Reevaluation

(a) Section 504 regulations [34 CFR § 104.35(d)] do not specify a schedule for conducting reevaluations. It is required that reevaluations are conducted periodically, at least every three years, unless individual circumstances indicate otherwise.

(b) Periodic reevaluations should include the following: (i) a written opinion by a treating health care professional substantiating the student's physical or mental condition; and (ii) documentation of evaluative data supporting continuing eligibility for 504 services.

(6) Student Discipline

(a) The nature of disabling conditions shall be considered when developing and implementing student behavior management strategies and discipline. Furthermore, if the student commits a violation of the school rules for which a suspension e.g. in-school, out-of-school, bus suspension, expulsion, etc. is considered which could result in more than 10 cumulative days for the school year, a multidisciplinary committee must first meet to determine if the behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability. If it is determined that the behavior is a product of the disability, the 504 Team shall review and adjust the current plan, if appropriate.

5. District-wide Procedures

a. Assurance of Nondiscrimination [34 CRF § 104.5 (a)]

(1) Assurances of nondiscrimination that programs are operated in compliance with Section 504 requirements are included on various applications for federal funding.

b. Designated Employee [34 CRF § 104.7 (a)]

(1) A school district (employing more than fifteen persons) shall designate an individual responsible for coordinating compliance efforts. The City Schools of Decatur Director of Pupil Services shall also be the District 504 Coordinator, the individual who oversees Section 504 procedures. Furthermore, each City Schools of Decatur principal, or his or her designee, shall be the building level 504/ coordinator.

c. Procedural Safeguards

(1) City Schools of Decatur provides with respect to actions regarding the identification, evaluation, or educational placement under Section 504 of persons who, because of disability, need, or who are believed to need special instruction or related services, a

system of procedural safeguards. Rights included in these safeguards are appropriate notice, an opportunity for the parents or guardian of the person to examine the child's educational records (the school district shall follow procedures established in its Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) policy to which parents are provided annual notice), an impartial hearing with opportunity for participation by the person's parents or guardians and representation by counsel, and a review procedure. These rights are outlined in the City Schools of Decatur Section 504 Procedural Safeguards and Notice of Rights of Students and Parents Under Section 504 and are to be provided to parents when decisions are made regarding evaluation, identification, and placements under Section 504.

d. Section 504 Grievance Policy

Students or parents/guardians of students who believe that they have been discriminated against on the basis of a disability may file a grievance as follows:

(i) The grievant shall make a complaint in writing to the building Section 504 coordinator (i.e., the principal or his or her designee) within ten (10) calendar days of the alleged occurrence. The building Section 504 coordinator shall communicate his or her written decision to the grievant within five (5) school days after receipt of the written complaint.

(ii) If the grievant is unsatisfied with the decision of the building 504 Coordinator, the grievant may appeal the decision of the building 504 Coordinator to the system 504 Coordinator (i.e., the Director of Pupil Services) by submitting a written appeal to the system 504 Coordinator within five (5) school days of issuance of the decision by the building 504 Coordinator. The appeal must be written and must set forth the reason the previous decision is not satisfactory. The system 504 Coordinator will issue his or her decision within ten (10) days of receipt of the written appeal. The system 504 Coordinator's decision shall be final.

e. Notice of Rights

(1) Preceding, following, or refusing to evaluate a student for Section 504, parents or guardians of students shall be provided a copy of City Schools of Decatur Section 504 Procedural Safeguards and Notice of Rights of Students and Parents Under Section 504. This Notice of Rights will also be provided to parents or guardians prior to significant change in accommodations, and as often, thereafter, as the student is reevaluated. Other procedural safeguards include the following:

(2) District Child-Find & Non-Discrimination Notice Activities [34 CFR § 104.32 & 34 CFR § 104.8]

(3) Annually the school district shall make public announcements through the local newspaper of its efforts to locate all disabled

children ages three through twenty-one. The City Schools of Decatur shall endeavor “to identify and locate every qualified disabled person [within the district] who is not receiving a public education.” The IDEA child-find activities will be utilized to implement this requirement.

(4) The **child-find obligation** includes providing a notice to school personnel and parents of the school's obligations under Section 504. The following **notice of nondiscrimination** [34 CRF § 104.32 (a) & 104.8 (a)] shall appear in student/parent handbooks, employee handbooks, and published personnel recruiting materials.

(5) No qualified handicapped person shall, solely by reason of their handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination from any program or activity of the City Schools of Decatur. The City Schools of Decatur seeks to locate and identify every qualified handicapped person ages three through twenty-one. A free appropriate public education will be provided qualified handicapped individuals.”

(6) The notice of non-discrimination shall announce that the employee who holds the position of Director of Pupil Services is also the Section 504 Coordinator, and is responsible for coordinating compliance activities. The Director/Coordinator may be contacted at the City Schools of Decatur Board of Education, 125 Electric, Decatur, GA 30030, 404-371-3601.

f. Enforcement

(1) Enforcement of Section 504 is the responsibility of the Office of Civil Rights. Contact:

Region IV- AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN
Office for Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
61 Forsyth Street, S.W. Suite 3B70
Atlanta, GA 30323
OCR phone numbers
404-562-7886
404-331-2867 (TDD)
404-562-7881 FAX

g. Nonacademic Services

(1) Qualified disabled students shall be provided an equal opportunity to engage in counseling services, physical recreational athletics, transportation, special interest clubs, etc. Qualified disabled students:

(a) shall not be counseled toward more restrictive career objectives than non-disabled students (with similar abilities) [34 CFR 104.37(b)], and

(b) shall have an equal opportunity to participate in physical education courses and athletics. Although qualified disabled students may participate in separate activities for the disabled,

they shall not be denied the opportunity to compete in courses that are not separate or different. [34 CFR § 104.37(c)(1-2)].

C. Title I Targeted Assistance Program

1. Instructional Strategies and Programs

a. Classroom teachers provide Tier I activities to reinforce and differentiate student learning. When students need additional support beyond Tier I activities, Title I classroom teachers complete Title I selection forms using multiple criteria. When Renfroe students qualify for Title I services, students are served during the school day, and receive Title I instruction from highly qualified teachers. Decatur High students receive instruction from highly qualified teachers during the school day and during scheduled Saturday classes. Title I teachers provide supplemental Tier II, and/or Tier III Intervention instruction, based on students' needs.

b. Renfroe Title I teachers provide supplemental support to selected students in the areas of Mathematics, Reading, Writing, and Language Arts. Decatur High School Title I teachers provide credit recovery opportunities as well as supplemental academic support to selected students. Teachers use research based materials and intervention strategies to support student learning.

c. Title I teachers use research based programs such as iLearn, Successful Reader, and Credit Recovery programs to reinforce skills students need to bridge the achievement gap. Title I students receive both small group and individualized instruction, as well as skill based computerized instruction.

2. Selection

a. During post-planning, Title I teachers complete multiple criteria math selection forms for **ALL** Renfroe students. These forms include MAP data and ~~GMAS EOG data~~; Data points are assigned to scores and tallied. Selection forms are placed in descending order, from highest to lowest scores, providing a ranking of students needing Math service. Students with the greatest need are served first with as many students served as possible. Students not served are placed on a monitored waiting list until space is available. Students scoring 0 points are not served.

b. Renfroe students needing support in Reading/LA are ranked and served using the same but separate process.

c. Renfroe students needing support in writing are selected using the same procedure with different data criteria. Writing students are selected according to MAP writing scores.

d. It is possible that a student may need both Title I Math and Reading/Writing support. However, it is also possible for a student to be receiving Tier II or Tier III instruction in Math through Title I programs and be on grade level in Reading/Writing.

e. Decatur High students are screened for Title I eligibility using different criteria for each grade level because student assessments vary according to grade level. Selection eligibility also varies for different types of service. For example, a student may qualify for Saturday School support, and not qualify for Learning Lab support, Data points are assigned to scores and tallied. Selection forms are placed in descending order, from highest to lowest scores, providing a ranking of students needing service. Students with the greatest need are served first with as many students served as possible. Students not served are placed on a monitored waiting list until space is available. Students scoring 0 points are not served.

3. Provisions to Serve All Eligible Students

a. The Board of Education of the City Schools of Decatur does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, marital status, sexual orientation, or gender identity in its employment practices, programs, activities, or student placement. Therefore, provisions are made to support all eligible students regardless of circumstance. System-wide procedures have been established to remove barriers that affect student achievement. CSD's Homeless Liaison and Social Worker coordinate transportation and after-school tutoring for homeless students, as well as provide supplies and other services as needed. Similar services will be provided for migrant students or students from neglected or delinquent institutes should they enroll at CSD's Title I schools.

b. LEP, economically disadvantaged, ELL and ESS students receive additional services from highly qualified ESOL and ESS teachers.

4. Highly Qualified

a. At present all Title I teachers are highly qualified. Parents of participating Title I students have the right to inquire about the qualifications of their child's teachers. Parents of participating Title I students will receive official notification if schools hire teachers who are not highly qualified. Title I and Title II funding have been set aside to provide professional development opportunities to ensure that all teachers remain highly qualified.

5. Parent Involvement (Cycle of Communication and Participation)

a. Policy

(1) In the spring City Schools of Decatur's Title I department distributes parent interest surveys to all parents of students attending Title I schools. Parents return the surveys to the front office or Title I teachers. Title I teachers will collect and tally the results of the parent survey. Results are shared with all interested parties. In May parents are invited to attend meetings to assist in developing both school and the district parent policies and plans for the upcoming school year.

b. Plan and Compact

(1) During the spring system-wide parent meeting, parents preview their school's Title I budget and will assist in developing the Targeted Assistance and parent plans for their school. Parents will also provide input in editing the school's Student/Parent/School compact.

(2) In May parents will complete a separate short survey designed to evaluate Title I parent activities and instructional program. Council members and Title I teachers use results of the survey to ensure that their schools' Targeted Assistance plan, and parent compact address survey concerns and comments as needed.

c. Parent Activities

(1) The cycle continues as Title I parents attend an annual Title I meeting in August or September to learn more about Title I and to receive Parent Policies, Plans, and Compacts. Activities will be provided throughout the school year as detailed in plans. Because all Title I schools have Targeted Assistance Programs, and Title I funding may only support Title I participants, the cost of any collaborative effort will be shared appropriately.

6. Coordination of Services

a. Title I teachers work closely with ESOL teachers and ESS teachers to coordinate services for students needing extra academic support. They also collaborate with classroom teachers to reinforce grade level skills and use MAP and ~~GMAS-EOG~~ data to plan supplemental, Tier II, and/or Tier III activities to help students meet the State content standards and State student performance standards. Title I teachers individualize instruction as needed to help students master missing skills. Title I funding is set aside to provide professional development opportunities to train teachers in the latest research based methods.

7. Reviewing Progress

a. Schools use AIMS Web data, MAP data, End-of-Course testing and research program data to monitor Title I students' progress on an ongoing basis. Title I teachers analyze the data regularly and create activities to differentiate instruction as needed. Teachers record students' progress and use computerized data printouts as documentation for AIP meetings to assist in placement of students in the RTI process. As a result, instructional grouping is flexible and different levels/layers of Title I service are provided to help students meet the State content standards and State student performance standards.

8. Procedures for Annual Assessment

a. Individual student assessments are embedded in research-based programs used by Title I teachers, and are used to monitor student progress throughout the year. MAP tests are administered three times a year – August, January, and April. Georgia Milestone tests are

administered each spring. ~~Georgia's High School Graduation Test is administered annually.~~ Testing schedules are listed on school calendars, posted on school websites, posted on the school marquees, and sent home in school newsletters. Results of testing are shared individually with parents and explained more specifically in workshops, and during teacher/parent conferences.

D. Hospital/Homebound Services

1. Purpose and Scope

a. 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 of time. HHB instruction may be used to 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 in order to receive HHB services.

b. HHB services are not intended to supplant regular school services and are by design temporary. The student must anticipate being absent from school for a minimum of 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 who is currently treating the student for the diagnosis presented.

2. Eligibility

a. The student must be enrolled in City Schools of Decatur if he or she is requesting this service. Private or home school students are **NOT** eligible for HHB services from City Schools of Decatur

b. The student must have a medical and/or psychiatric condition that is documented by a licensed physician. Only a psychiatrist can submit a medical request form for an emotional or psychiatric disorder. The psychiatric condition presented must be listed in the latest edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM). The referring licensed physician and/or licensed psychiatrist must be the treating physician or psychiatrist for the medical and/or psychiatric condition for which the student is requesting HHB services. Examples include the following:

(1) A student with leukemia may not request HHB services with a medical statement from a pediatrician. A statement from the oncologist currently treating the student is required.

(2) A student with paranoid delusions may not request HHB services with a medical statement from a psychologist or pediatrician. The medical request must be from the licensed psychiatrist currently treating the student.

- c. The student must be anticipated to be absent from school for a minimum of ten consecutive school days or for intermittent periods of time anticipated to exceed ten school days during the school year.
- d. Students who have been declared emancipated by a court or are 18 years of age or older are eligible to sign the Hospital/Homebound (HHB) Services Request Form and the Compliant Authorization for Exchange of Health and Education Information (The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act - HIPAA).
- e. Students who have any form of influenza or other airborne contagious diseases will not be provided services until the licensed physician certifies that the student is no longer infectious.
- f. The local education agency (LEA) may require the parent, guardian, emancipated minor, or student 18 years of age or older to sign the HIPAA form relating to the reason for the request for HHB services. If the LEA requires the HIPAA form, it must be submitted before services can be provided.
- g. The parent/guardian, emancipated minor, or student 18 years of age or older is required to sign the release statement on the HHB application permitting district staff to have contact with the licensed physician or psychiatrist who is treating the student for the diagnosis presented. The LEA may contact the physician or psychiatrist who is treating the student to obtain information needed to determine if the student is eligible for HHB services and to provide appropriate instructional delivery. Failure to sign the release statement may cause a delay or denial of HHB services.
- h. Students approved for intermittent HHB services must be absent for three consecutive school days on each occurrence before HHB services will be provided.

3. Application Process

- a. Requirements: The LEA administrator for HHB is the Director of Exceptional Education and Pupil Services. Procedures are outlined and given in writing with the HHB application.
- b. The parent/guardian, emancipated minor, or student 18 years of age or older should contact the school's HHB contact (Director of Exceptional Education and Pupil Services) to discuss HHB services and to obtain an application for these services.
- c. The parent/guardian, emancipated minor, or student 18 years of age or older should take the HHB application to the licensed physician or licensed psychiatrist treating the student for the medical condition. The completed application must be returned to the school HHB contact. An incomplete application may cause a delay in services. Only the original paperwork will be accepted as application for hospital/homebound services.

- d. A committee of pupil services staff will review the application to ensure that the student meets the minimal eligibility requirements. A committee member will follow up with the family regarding approval or denial of HHB services.
- e. The application will be forwarded to the appropriate school team for regular education students or Individualized Education Program (IEP) team for special education students.
- f. Within five school days of receiving the completed *Hospital/Homebound (HHB) Services Request Form*, the appropriate HHB personnel shall notify the parent, guardian, emancipated minor or student 18 years of age or older of the time and place of the school team or IEP meeting to discuss HHB services. A telephone conference call or other electronic communication may be considered a meeting.
- g. The school team or IEP team will develop an Educational Service Plan (ESP) for each designated HHB student, or provide HHB documentation as an extension of the IEP. 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.
- h. The plan does not need to be lengthy, but it must give all parties enough information to adequately serve the student's needs.
- i. If the doctor does not address reentry on the medical referral form, the LEA may want to contact the doctor directly. If such information is not provided, the school team can develop the reentry plan without doctor input.
- j. The ESP shall identify the number of hours necessary to meet the instructional needs of the student. To comply with the Georgia State Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.31 Hospital/Homebound (HHB) Services and meet attendance requirements, a minimum of three hours of instruction per week must be provided.
- k. The ESP shall identify the appropriate course load for the student during the approved period of HHB instruction. It is noted that HHB instruction is not structured to supplant the regular school day and may, therefore limit the number and type of classes offered.
- l. Parents/guardians of students, emancipated minors, or students 18 years of age or older who are hospitalized must follow the application process in order for the LEA to provide HHB services in the hospital setting.
- m. A contractual agreement between the LEA and hospital that stipulates the services to be provided shall be entered into prior to the hospital providing HHB services.

4. Attendance

- a. The student shall be counted present for the entire week when he or she is provided instruction on an individual basis or as part of a group by the HHB teacher for a minimum of three hours per week.
- b. A student shall be counted absent for the week when the HHB teacher's visit is cancelled by the parent/guardian, emancipated minor or student 18 years of age or older. The LEA may, at its discretion, reschedule the cancelled session. Once the schedule is completed, the student is counted in accordance with the Georgia State Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-.10 Student Attendance.
- c. If the student is unable to receive HHB instruction during the school week due to his or her medical condition, the school may, at the school's discretion, schedule a make-up session. Once the session is completed, the student is counted in accordance with the Georgia State Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-.10 Student Attendance.
- d. Make-up sessions must have documentation that identifies the date of the absence that is being made-up, the number of hours of instruction, the type of instruction provided, and the content area(s) taught. If the student is utilizing online instructional courses, documentation from the online provider will be utilized.
- e. The health care facility providing approved HHB services to a student confined in the facility must submit verification of the number of instructional hours the student received to the appropriate HHB contact at the LEA for the student to be counted present during this time. If the student is utilizing online instructional courses, documentation from the online provider will be utilized.

5. Scheduling

- a. Within five school days of receiving the completed medical referral form, the HHB services initial contact shall notify parent of the time and place of the school team for regular education students or the IEP meeting for special education students regarding HHB services and the development of the ESP. It is recommended that the team meeting be held as quickly as possible in order to assure continuity of instruction for the approved HHB student.
- b. The time of the instructional session shall be arranged by the HHB teacher in cooperation with the parent, guardian, emancipated minor, or student 18 years of age or older. The time of the instructional session will typically occur during the school day. Online instructional courses may be utilized.
- c. The parent, guardian, or approved adult parent designee as identified in the ESP must be present at the student's home during the entire instructional period. If an adult is not present at the time of the scheduled sessions or leaves the home at any time during the scheduled session, that session shall be considered cancelled without

notice and shall not be rescheduled. The student shall be counted absent for that school week.

d. A parent, guardian, or approved adult parent designee is not required to be in attendance during the session with students 18 years of age or older.

6. Instructional Delivery

a. An individual employed as an HHB teacher must hold Georgia teacher's certification. The HHB teacher must be employed and supervised by a designated official of the LEA. The HHB teacher should have a broad background of professional training and experience so that he or she will be able to adapt instruction to each student's needs. The HHB teacher must also be able to adjust to a variety of home situations and be knowledgeable of cultural diversity existing within his or her community. Online courses may be utilized.

b. HHB teachers providing educational services in a hospital must hold Georgia teacher's certification and possess similar characteristics as teachers in an LEA.

c. HHB instruction can be offered on a one-on-one basis, or in a small group, at the home of the student, at the health care facility where the student is confined, or through online learning courses, such as the Georgia Virtual School or other approved online courses or other locations as identified by the ESP. The type of instruction offered is based on the agreement as set forth in the ESP which shall take into consideration the cognitive ability and medical condition of the student.

d. Other locations that may be considered are the public libraries, community centers, Boys and Girls Clubs, etc.

e. If instruction is provided in the student's home a table, desk in a work space that is well ventilated, smoke-free, clean, and quiet (e.g., free of radio, TV, pets, and visitors) must be provided. A schedule for student study time between teacher visits should be established and the student should be prepared for each session with the teacher.

f. For students participating in online learning courses such as the Georgia Virtual School or other approved courses, the HHB teacher may facilitate the learning process, monitor assignments and provide tutoring assistance as defined in the ESP. Participation in an online course will meet the requirement of the minimum of three hours of HHB instruction per school week for the HHB student to be considered present by the school.

g. HHB teachers shall provide direct delivery of the course materials provided by the student's classroom teacher. The classroom teacher is required to provide to the HHB teacher a course syllabus, assignments, and tests and any supplementary materials (i.e., study guides for quizzes/tests, chapter notes, etc.) in a timely manner.

h. All state mandated tests shall be administered unless the student is approved to take an alternate assessment as stipulated in the ESP. The decision to administer final examinations shall be included in the ESP.

i. Full credit shall be given for work completed as stipulated in the ESP.

j. HHB instructional delivery shall focus on the core subjects, i.e., reading, language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. However, elective courses may, at the discretion of the LEA, be included in HHB instruction for graduating seniors.

7. Instructional Materials

a. The HHB student shall use instructional materials issued by the student's classroom teachers. The student's parents or guardians shall be responsible for obtaining all of the student's books from the school prior to the first session of HHB instruction.

b. High school students approved for HHB services may receive instruction through Georgia Virtual School (GAVS) or other approved online courses. Instructional resources associated with online courses shall be provided by the LEA.

8. Termination of Services

a. A student is released from the HHB program:

(1) As of the projected return date on the Application for Hospital/Homebound Services Medical Referral or if the licensed physician or licensed psychiatrist indicates that the medical condition has changed or as defined in the ESP.

(2) When the student is employed in any capacity, goes on vacation, regularly participates in extracurricular activities, or is no longer confined to home.

(3) On the last day of school of the regular school year.

(4) When the student returns to school or is able to return to school for any portion of the school day other than to participate in state-mandated standardized testing.

(5) When the parent/guardian cancels three HHB instructional sessions without providing 24 hours notice.

(6) When the conditions of the location where HHB services are provided, are not conducive for instruction, or threaten the health and welfare of the HHB teacher.

VI. Exceptional Student Services Progression

A. Special Education

1. Referral

- a. Either a parent of a child, or a state educational agency, other state agency or local educational agency may initiate a request for an initial evaluation to determine if the child is a child with a disability.
- b. City Schools of Decatur respects the request of a parent for an initial evaluation to determine if the child is a child with a disability and weighs that with the Georgia requirements for pre-referral interventions. The purpose of the City Schools of Decatur Response to Intervention Process is to prevent the automatic referral of students to special education without first attempting to remediate learning and behavioral problems in other ways. When a parent directly requests an evaluation for the purpose of identifying a disability or determining eligibility, City Schools of Decatur will consult with that parent, discuss the efficacy of pre-referral interventions and make a decision on a case by case basis. Parents cannot be denied their right to request a full evaluation of their child. The request, however, can either be approved or denied. Requests may be refused to if
 - (1) evaluation for special education is not needed: the child is meeting academic standards and not displaying any social or behavioral concerns.
 - (2) if the child is not in SST and does not require support through the RTI process.
- c. Referrals are addressed in the order in which they are received. School psychologists and speech/language pathologists coordinate evaluations with school administrative staff and consider student and teacher daily schedules to the greatest extent possible.

2. Evaluations

- a. Exceptional Student Services in the City Schools of Decatur will follow the requirements and timelines for evaluations and eligibility determinations as set forth in Georgia State Rules 160-4-7-.04 and 160-4-7-05.
- b. Requirements
 - (1) The City Schools of Decatur has established and implemented evaluation procedures that meet requirements of this rule.
 - (2) Once a student is referred to special education from the AIP team or other appropriate source, the **evaluation and eligibility process** shall be completed without undue delay in the following time frames:

(a) Within **60** calendar days from receipt of parent's(s)/guardian's(s')/ surrogate's(s') consent for initial evaluation to the determination of eligibility. The winter and spring holiday period, when students are not in attendance for at least five consecutive days, shall not be counted toward the 60-calendar day timeline. The calendar days during the summer vacation period, when the majority of CSD's teachers are not on contract, do not count toward the 60 day timeline, except that if the consent for evaluation is received 30 or more days prior to the end of the teacher contract period, the 60-day calendar must be followed.

(3) The timeframe described above does not apply if:

(a) The parent of a child repeatedly fails or refuses to produce the child for the evaluation

(b) A child enrolls in a school of another LEA after the relevant timeline has begun and prior to a determination by the child's previous LEA as to whether the child is a child with a disability

(4) Psychoeducational assessment of students referred because of learning and/or behavior problems is the responsibility of a qualified psychological examiner. A comprehensive evaluation, including psychological testing and clinical assessment, shall be required for diagnosis and special education program planning for students with disabilities who exhibit intellectual disabilities, autism, specific learning disabilities and/or emotional and behavioral disorders.

(5) Parent's(s')/guardian's(s')/surrogate's(s') consent.

(a) City Schools of Decatur shall obtain an informed consent from the parent(s)/guardian(s)/surrogate(s) of a referred student before the evaluation is conducted as described in Rule 160-4-7-.09 Procedural Safeguards.

(b) If the parent(s)/guardian(s)/surrogate(s) of such student refuse consent for the evaluation, City Schools of Decatur may continue to pursue an evaluation by utilizing the mediation and impartial due process hearing procedures.

c. Initial Evaluation Procedures

(1) Upon receipt of the referral packet from the Central Office Administrative Assistant, appropriate personnel will conduct an evaluation that addresses concerns in the referral.

(2) The evaluators will use a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional and developmental information from a variety of sources, including information provided by the parent(s)/guardian(s)/surrogate(s). Not use any single procedure as the sole criterion for determining whether a student is a student with a disability or determining an appropriate educational program for the student; and

(3) Evaluators will assure materials and procedures used to assess a student with limited English proficiency are selected and administered to ensure that they measure the extent to which the

student has a disability and needs special education, rather than measuring the student's English language skills.

d. Reevaluation Procedures

(1) Reevaluation review meetings are scheduled prior to the due process triennial date to assess the need for, and scope of, evaluation to support continued eligibility. The review committee is comprised of the case manager, parent, school psychologist (or speech and language pathologist for speech/language impaired only students), LEA, and regular classroom teacher. Review meetings must be held at least 60 days prior to the triennial date. Case managers are responsible for arranging the review meetings.

(2) During Spring it is important to complete all evaluation review meetings with triennial dates through the end of the following October. Additionally, try to complete reviews for all 3rd graders, 5th graders and 8th graders (moving to next level) through the following December.

(3) Review meeting procedures

- (a) File should be reviewed prior to the meeting.
- (b) The case manager, LEA or psychologist may facilitate the meeting.
- (c) The meeting information decisions are documented on the Reevaluation Redetermination Form; meeting minutes are attached.
- (d) As a general rule begin with stating the purpose of the meeting and introductions.
- (e) Next have teachers provide a brief description of strengths and weaknesses.
- (f) Next review the results of the previous evaluations. Also review any additional data available (~~GMAS-EOG~~, MAP, benchmarks, discipline records, outside evaluations, grades, etc.).
- (g) Consider these questions:
 - (i) Do these results seem consistent with how the student is currently performing?
 - (ii) Does the committee believe the student continues to meet the criteria for eligibility?
 - (iii) Does the committee believe the student may be eligible for another program?
 - (iv) What type of evaluation is needed (full evaluation; partial evaluation consisting of the specific information required) to determine continued eligibility?
 - (v) Do the current goals and objective appear appropriate?
 - (vi) Does the current placement appear appropriate?

(4) If further evaluation is recommended, then the Consent for Evaluation (SPE-4) should be signed by the parent. If less than a comprehensive evaluation is recommended, then the specific nature of the evaluation should be stated on the consent form.

(5) If no further evaluation is recommended, then the Continuation of Eligibility should be signed by all.

(6) The system must conduct a reevaluation review and consider reevaluation of a student with a disability before determining that the child is no longer a child with a disability who requires special education services. However, it is not needed when a student graduates from high school with a regular education diploma or exceeds the age of eligibility (22nd birthday).

e. Eligibility Procedures

(1) Completed psychological reports are placed in the student's special education file. A copy of the report is sent to the principal or his/her designee and the psychologist notifies the building AIP chair that the evaluated student's case is ready to be considered by the eligibility team. The school psychologist is responsible for sending notices of the date of the eligibility team meeting to the parent/guardian and the classroom teacher, appropriate special education teacher(s), school administrator, ESS administrators and other individuals as appropriate.

(2) Results of speech/language evaluations need not be documented as a separate report, but are summarized within the eligibility report. The speech/language pathologist is responsible for sending notices of the date of the eligibility team meeting to the parent/guardian and the classroom teacher, school administrator, ESS administrators and other individuals as appropriate.

f. At the eligibility committee meeting, the eligibility form is completed by the through discussion of classroom performance, review of AIP information, input from parent/guardian and findings from the evaluations of the school psychologist, speech/language pathologist and/or special educator. The eligibility team must consider all the eligibility categories that the data indicate the student might meet criteria for. The eligibility team must examine and consider all exclusionary factors for each disability category as well. Eligibility status is reached by consensus; any dissenting member may provide written comment at the end of the form. All committee members sign. If a student is found to be ineligible for special education, copies of the referral packet should be returned to the referring school.

(1) A copy of the evaluation report and the documentation of determination of eligibility shall be given to the parent(s)/guardian(s)/surrogate(s).

(2) In making a determination of eligibility, a student shall not be determined to be a student with a disability if the determinant factor for that eligibility determination is lack of academic

instruction, limited English proficiency, or that the student does not meet the program area eligibility requirements under these rules.

g. Eligibility Categories

(1) City Schools of Decatur uses the eligibility categories detailed in State Board Rule 160-4-7-.02. Included in this rule are appendices that offer definitions, eligibility requirements, placement and delivery options, and additional requirements. These are the eligibility areas for the state of Georgia:

- (a) Autism
- (b) Deafblind (D/B)
- (c) Deaf/Hard of Hearing (D/HH)
- (d) Emotional and Behavior Disorder (EBD)
- (e) Intellectual Disability (Mild, Moderate, Severe, Profound)
- (f) Orthopedic Impairment (OI)
- (g) Other Health Impairment (OHI).
- (h) Significant Developmental Delay (SDD)
- (i) Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD)
- (j) Speech-Language (SI) Impairment
- (k) Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)
- (l) Visual Impairment (VI)

h. Independent Educational Evaluations

(1) If a parent **disagrees with** the results of a completed evaluation done by the district, the parent may request an outside independent educational evaluation (IEE) paid for by the district. The district has two options in this case:

- (a) agree to pay for the independent evaluation or
- (b) begin due process procedures to show that the district's evaluation is adequate. If there is a due process hearing and the district's evaluation is judged to be sufficient, then it will not have to pay for an IEE.

(2) A parent is entitled to only one independent educational evaluation at public expense each time the public agency conducts an evaluation with which the parent disagrees. The qualifications of the independent evaluator must be the same as those required of the district evaluators. The district may set a reasonable limit on the cost of the independent evaluation. (See 34 C.F.R. §300.502 of the Federal Rules and Regulations for a complete explanation of IEEs.)

(3) A parent does not have the right to an independent evaluation at public expense until he or she has allowed the district to conduct its own evaluation. Then, if the parent disagrees with the results of the evaluation, he or she may request an IEE. The parent always has the right to obtain an outside IEE at his or her own expense, before or after the district's evaluation. As long as the evaluation was conducted by someone who meets the qualifications for district evaluations, the district must consider the results of the parentally requested evaluation.

(4) If the district agrees to provide an IEE, the district will send a list of evaluators who meet district qualifications from which the parent may choose. If the parent chooses another evaluator the district will then contact that evaluator to assess credentials and costs.

3. Delivery Models (Where)

a. Community-based program

(1) For preschool-age students. The service provider travels to a community setting to provide services to the child, consult with staff or parents, modify the environment, and/or modify the curriculum or materials. Services generally consist of direct teaching to the children through a combination of individual and group activities, as well as staff development and consultation.

(2) For school-age students. In order to participate in community-based instruction programs and be reported as receiving services, a student shall meet the eligibility requirements for the area of exceptionality being reported and have an individualized education program (IEP) that specifies community-based instruction.

(3) For students who are receiving community-based instruction as indicated in the student's IEP, there shall always be supervision by the appropriately certified teacher, the special education community study coordinator or designated school system personnel.

(4) For students receiving community-based vocational instruction there shall be a written agreement between the community business and the school system.

b. Home-based program. The IEP Committee determines that services should be provided in the home for non-medical reasons. The amount of time served and the person(s) to deliver home-based services shall be determined by the IEP Committee. For students with disabilities who have a medically diagnosed physical condition, refer to the hospital/homebound program section. This delivery model is most commonly used for preschool age children who spend their day at home.

c. Local school facility. Students are provided services in the school building they would attend if non-disabled and where their same-age peers without disabilities attend school. City Schools of Decatur keeps a yearly contract with DeKalb County Schools to keep possibilities open for placement within their schools

d. Georgia Network of Educational and Therapeutic Support (GNETS)

(1) Formerly known as the Psychoeducational Network, the Georgia Network for Educational and Therapeutic Support (GNETS) programs support the City Schools of Decatur

continuum of services by providing comprehensive special education and therapeutic support for the children served. The purpose of the GNETS is to prevent children from requiring residential or other more restrictive placements by offering cost-effective comprehensive services in local areas. Families have the opportunity to be engaged in all aspects of service planning. Child specialists (educators, psychologists, social workers, psychiatrists, behavior support specialists, etc.) from a variety of professions collaborate on behalf of the children served.

(2) An IEP team may consider in-class services by a GNETS program for a child based upon documentation of the severity of the duration, frequency and intensity of behaviors interfering with school performance. This documentation must include prior extension of less restrictive services and data which indicate such services have not enabled the child to benefit educationally.

(3) Referral Process

(a) The referral process is initiated when an IEP team, with consultation from the ESS Coordinator and/or Behavior Specialist, submits an Initial Request for Assistance Packet to the DeKalb-Rockdale GNETS. This packet includes the following information:

- (i) EBD Eligibility Reports
- (ii) Current Psychological Evaluation (and any other psychological/psychiatric evaluations)
- (iii) Social History report (if available)
- (iv) Current IEP (all pages, including goals and objectives, continued staff notes, and updates)
- (v) Completed Initial Referral Form (signed by Director of Exceptional Student Services, City Schools of Decatur)
- (vi) Parent Questionnaire
- (vii) Functional Behavioral Assessment
- (viii) Documentation of severity of behavior, including:
 - (ix) Discipline record
 - (x) Behavioral narrative/behavioral log
- (xi) Copy of:
 - (a) Current registration form
 - (b) Immunization record
 - (c) Vision and Hearing Screening form
 - (d) Birth certificate
 - (e) Social Security card
 - (f) Grades and Transcript

- (g) Standardized Test Results
- (h) Documentation of Legal Guardianship (if applicable)
- (i) Documentation of Surrogate Parent (if applicable)

(b) An explanation must be provided for any of the above information not included in the packet. The GNETS staff reviews the packet to determine if the LEA has implemented sufficient services and interventions, if GNETS services are needed in the home school and/or to determine whether or not the student's emotional/behavioral problems are so severe that he/she cannot be served in a school-based program.

e. Residential program. In instances when students cannot function educationally in any of the other described delivery models and residential-related services are needed, such a program shall be provided. Whenever a student is placed by a system in an approved private school or private facility a formal agreement will be drafted that articulates the funding mechanisms for the arrangement.

f. Special day-school program. In instances when students cannot function in a regular school setting, special day-school programs may be provided. A special day school program is one in which children and youth with disabilities receive special education and related services for greater than 50 percent of the school day in separate facilities.

g. State-Operated Schools. Students presenting severe sensory impairments and/or multiple disabilities may be considered for education services at a state-operated school. City Schools of Decatur may refer these students for placement consideration.

4. Service Delivery Program (How Much)

a. IEP teams must always consider what the least restrictive environment (LRE) is for a student. Students must participate in the general education classroom to the greatest extent that is appropriate for that student. Students may receive services both within and outside the regular classroom.

b. Services provided within the general education classroom. The student is enrolled in the regular program and receives special education services for as much time as the IEP team decides is appropriate.

c. Services provided outside the general education setting. The student who requires specially designed instruction in a special education setting to address their particular educational needs will receive services from a special education teacher in a location different from that of the regular classroom. When IEP teams decide a student needs services outside the general education classroom, they must provide a rationale as to why these services are needed.

d. Full day requirement. Students with disabilities are full-time students. Students' instructional days meet state requirements for daily

number of instructional minutes. In order to provide most students with disabilities a free and appropriate public education (FAPE), a full school day is required. However, in rare cases where physical or mental impairments compromise a student's ability to tolerate a full school day, the IEP plan may detail a part-time or alternate daily schedule. Such decisions are made by exception and are the responsibility of the IEP team. In such cases, medical documentation may be requested for the IEP team to consider.

5. Service Delivery Models (How)

- a. Co-Taught/collaborative model. The special education teacher works with the identified students and the regular teacher within the regular classroom setting.
- b. Consultative model. The special education teacher assists the regular education teacher in understanding the needs of the student with a disability and in developing appropriate modifications and adaptations to meet the student's needs within the regular classroom. At a minimum, the special education teacher works directly with the student with a disability one segment per month.
- c. Supportive services. Those services provided for students whose IEP specifies specially designed instruction or supplemental aids or services in alternative placements and/or especially in the regular classroom. The services provided must be from personnel such as paraprofessionals, interpreters, job coaches and other assistive personnel.
- d. Departmental model. The departmental model is designed for academic instruction for a student with a disability. The academic instruction as specified by the student's IEP may be provided by a variety of special education-certified teachers; however, the student shall be served an average of at least one segment per day by a special education teacher certified in the student's primary area of disability.
- e. Related vocational instructional program (RVI). A related vocational instructional program provides support services to secondary students with disabilities enrolled in vocational education programs. The RVI teacher acts as a liaison to help the student with a disability function within the vocational education program.

6. Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)

- a. An IEP is a written statement for a student with a disability that is developed, implemented, reviewed, and revised in accordance with Special Education Rules: Rule 160-4-7.01 through Rule 160-4-7.27. This requirement applies to all local school systems and state-operated programs.
- b. In developing each IEP, the IEP Committee shall consider the strengths and needs of the student, the concerns of the parent(s)/guardian(s) /surrogate parent(s) for the student's education, the impact of the student's disability on performance in the general

education curriculum, the results of the initial or most recent evaluation, and the results, as appropriate, of the student's statewide or districtwide assessments.

c. No City Schools of Decatur, teacher, or other person is required by IDEA or State Board Special Education Rules: Rule 160-4-7.01 through Rule 160-4-7.27.7 to be held accountable if the projected goals are not reached. However, IDEA does not prohibit City Schools of Decatur from establishing accountability systems regarding teacher, school, system performance. This does not limit the rights of a parent/guardian/surrogate parent to request revision of the IEP or to request a due process hearing if he or she thinks such efforts are not being made.

d. Sample IEP Agendas can be found with the PPP appendices.

e. IEP Committee Meeting Participants

(1) The term IEP Committee is a group of individuals as described below that is responsible for developing, reviewing, or revising an IEP for a student with a disability. City Schools of Decatur shall ensure that each IEP Committee meeting includes the following participants:

(a) The parent(s)/guardian(s)/surrogate parent(s) of the student with a disability.

(b) At least one of the student's regular education teachers (if the student is, or may be, participating in the regular education environment). The regular education teacher as a member of the IEP Committee, shall, to the extent appropriate, participate in the development of the IEP, including the determination of appropriate positive behavioral interventions and strategies and the determination of supplementary aids and services, program modifications, and support for school personnel. The student's regular education teacher shall, to the extent appropriate, participate in the review and revision of the student's IEP.

(c) A case manager is assigned for the student's case when he/she is found eligible for special education services. If a student is eligible for speech/language services only, the speech/language pathologist is the case manager. Case managers are responsible for all IEP documentation and management. For initial evaluations and reevaluations, the case manager or other appropriate designee is responsible for scheduling and informing participants of the date of the Individualized Education Program (IEP)/placement meeting.

(d) A Local Educational Agency (LEA) representative of the system who is qualified to provide, or supervise the provision of, specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of students with disabilities, is knowledgeable about the general curriculum, and is knowledgeable about the availability of resources of the system. Typically, this person is the principal of the school. The principal may designate another system member of the IEP team to also serve as the agency representative, if these criteria are met.

(e) Other individuals, at the discretion of the parent(s)/guardian(s)/surrogate parent(s) or system, who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the student, including related services personnel as appropriate. The determination of

the knowledge or special expertise of the individual invited shall be made by the party (either the parent or City Schools of Decatur) who invite the individual to be a member of the IEP Committee.

(f) An individual who can interpret the instructional implications of evaluation results. This individual may be one of the members described above.

(g) Individuals representing referral and/or cooperating agencies for preschool students.

(h) The student, when appropriate.

(i) A representative of any other agency that is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services for the student, whenever consideration of transition services is a purpose of the meeting. If an agency which was invited to send a representative to a meeting does not attend, the system shall take steps to obtain the participation of the other agency in the planning of any transition services/activities.

(j) Some members of the IEP team may be excused from attending a meeting if his/her area of curriculum is not going to be discussed at the IEP meeting and the parent agrees that he/she need not attend.

(i) A member of the IEP may also be excused when his/her area of the curriculum is being discussed if the parent consents to the excusal and if the team member submits input for the IEP in writing to both the parent and the IEP team prior to the meeting.

(ii) In both cases, parent agreement or consent should be obtained in writing from the parent. Schools will work with parents to help them understand why and how a staff member may be excused. Excusal is at the discretion of the parent.

(2) Parents/Guardian(s)/Surrogate Parent/Participation

(a) City Schools of Decatur shall take steps to ensure that the parent(s)/guardian(s)/ surrogate parent(s) of the student with a disability are present at the IEP Committee meeting or are afforded the opportunity to participate, including scheduling the meeting at a mutually agreed upon time and place and notifying him or her/them of the meeting early enough to ensure that he or she/they have an opportunity to attend.

(b) The invitation to the IEP Committee meeting shall indicate the purpose, time, and location of the meeting and who will be in attendance (required team members who will need a written excusal and additional members who do not require an excusal). The invitation shall inform the parent(s)/guardian(s)/surrogate parent(s) of his or her/their right to invite other individuals who, in his or her/their opinion, have knowledge or special expertise regarding their child, including related services personnel.

(c) for a student with a disability beginning at age 14 (or younger if appropriate) when a purpose of the meeting is the consideration of transition service needs that focus on the student's course of study, the invitation to the IEP Committee meeting shall indicate

(i) the purpose of the meeting is to consider transition service needs

(ii) that the student is invited

(iii) any other agency representative that is being invited.

(d) If it is not possible or practical for the parent(s)/guardian(s)/ surrogate parent(s) to attend, other alternatives to ensure his or her/their participation shall be attempted, including individual or conference telephone calls and/or Skype, Facetime, etc.

(e) A meeting may be conducted without the parent(s)/guardian(s)/surrogate parent(s) in attendance if he or she/they are unable to attend. In this case, City Schools of Decatur shall record its attempts to involve him or her/them. These records may include details of telephone calls made or attempted and the results, copies of correspondence sent and received, and details and results of visits made to the home or place of employment.

(f) City Schools of Decatur shall take whatever action is necessary to ensure that the parent(s)/guardian(s)/surrogate parent(s) understand(s) the proceedings at an IEP/Placement meeting, including arranging for an interpreter for a parent who is deaf or whose native language is other than English.

(g) If the parent(s)/guardian(s)/surrogate parent(s) agree to placement in a special education program, the SPE-11 Consent for Placement form must be signed. This form should be filed in the ESS Office

(h) City Schools of Decatur shall provide a copy of the IEP, including the placement decision, to the parent(s)/guardian(s)/surrogate parent(s) at no cost.

(i) City Schools of Decatur shall make every effort for the parent(s)/guardian(s)/surrogate parent(s) of each student with a disability to be a member(s) of any group that makes decisions on the student's educational placement.

f. The IEP for a student with a disability who is being placed in special education for the first time shall be in effect within 30 calendar days from the eligibility determination meeting. The winter and spring holiday period, when students are not in attendance for at least five consecutive days, shall not be counted toward the 30 calendar day timeline.

g. If extenuating circumstances, e.g., illness, unusual evaluation needs, revocation of parent's(s')/guardian's(s') /surrogate's(s') consent for evaluation, affect this time line, City Schools of Decatur shall document the exceptions.

h. Within that time period, the student must be evaluated and, if determined to be eligible, an IEP must be developed and special education and related services must be made available in accordance with the IEP.

i. For a student with a disability who is not yet receiving special education services, an IEP Committee meeting shall be conducted and an IEP developed within 30 calendar days of determination of the student's eligibility for special education. The IEP shall be in effect before special education and related services are provided. An IEP shall be implemented as soon as possible following the IEP meeting,

including any case in which the payment source for providing or paying for special education and related services is being determined.

(1) If a student has an IEP from another school district; Move-In Procedures are as follows.

(a) IEP and eligibility documents will be obtained from sending districts. The IEP from the sending district will be implemented in CSD until a new IEP can be developed. If documents cannot be obtained, the parent, student, and personnel from the sending school will be interviewed to determine the student's needs while records are being obtained.

(b) Special Education staff will review eligibility documents and IEP documents.

(c) If the student moves from another Georgia District with a current (with in 3 years) Georgia eligibility, the student remains eligible unless CSD re-evaluates.

(d) For both in state and out of state eligibilities, the eligibility must be reviewed by the school psychologist who will determine:

(i) If the eligibility is current (with in 3 years)

(ii) If the eligibility meets state guidelines.

(iii) If further evaluation is needed.

(e) If the eligibility meets state guidelines, it may be used to draft an IEP in CSD. If it does not, further evaluation must occur to establish eligibility in Georgia. Consent for Evaluation will be obtained.

(f) Special Education Case Manager will:

(i) Collect data on the IEP goals from sending district.

(ii) Draft a CSD IEP for the student and hold an IEP meeting.

j. IEP content

(1) A statement of the student's present levels of educational performance. This statement shall describe how the student's disability affects his or her educational performance in both academic and nonacademic areas. It must include a statement of how the student's disability affects involvement and progress in the general curriculum, or for preschool children, as appropriate, how the disability affects the child's participation in appropriate activities. Special factors may include the following:

(a) In the case of a student whose behavior impedes his or her learning or that of others, an FBA and BIP will be developed, that will include positive behavioral interventions, strategies and supports to address that behavior.

(b) In the case of a student with limited English proficiency, consider the language needs of the student as such needs relate to the student's IEP.

(c) In the case of a student who is blind or visually impaired, provide for instruction in Braille and the use of Braille unless the IEP Committee determines, after an evaluation of the student's

reading and writing skills, needs, and appropriate reading and writing media (including an evaluation of the student's future needs for instruction in Braille or the use of Braille), that instruction in Braille or the use of Braille is not appropriate for the student.

(d) Consider the communication needs of the student. Does the student have communication needs beyond what is addressed in the goals and special education services of the IEP?

(e) In the case of a student who is deaf or hard of hearing, consider the student's language and communication needs, opportunities for direct communications with peers and professional personnel in the student's language and communication mode, academic level, and full range of needs, including opportunities for direct instruction in the student's language and communication mode.

(f) Consider whether the student requires assistive technology devices and services.

(2) If, after considering the special factors (a) – (f) above, the IEP Committee determines that a student needs a particular device or service (including an intervention, accommodation, or other program modification) in order to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE), the IEP Committee must include a statement to that effect in the student's IEP.

(3) A statement of measurable annual goals to enable the student to be involved in and progress in the general education curriculum and to meet other educational needs resulting from the disability. IEPs for students participating in the Georgia Alternative Assessment (GAA) need to include benchmarks or short-term instructional objectives. For preschool students, the annual goals shall relate to enabling the student to participate in developmentally appropriate activities. The IEP must also include a statement of how the student's progress toward the annual goals will be measured. Criteria for determining on at least an annual basis whether goals (short term objectives for GAA students) are being achieved must be established at the time of the development of the IEP.

(4) A statement of the specific special education and related services and supplementary aids and services to be provided for the student, or on behalf of the student, and a statement of the program modifications or supports for school personnel that will be provided for the student to: advance toward attaining the goals; be involved and progress in the general curriculum; participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities; and be educated with other students with disabilities and with nondisabled students.

(5) An explanation of the extent, if any, to which the student will not participate with nondisabled students in the regular class and in extracurricular and nonacademic activities. This explanation shall be documented in placement decision which contains:

(a) Placement options considered to meet the individual student's needs.

(b) A rationale for the final placement decision, including an explanation of the extent, if any, to which the student will not participate in regular classes, extracurricular activities and nonacademic activities.

(6) A statement of individual modifications or accommodations in the administration of state or district wide assessments of student achievement needed for the student to participate in the assessment. If the IEP Committee determines that the student will not participate in a particular state or district wide assessment (or part of an assessment), a written explanation must be provided.

(7) Testing Accommodations

(a) Accommodations are changes in the administration of an assessment in terms of how the student takes or responds to the assessment. Broad categories of accommodations include presentation, response, setting, and scheduling.

(b) Accommodations do not change the construct intended to be measured by the assessment or the meaning of the resulting scores. Accommodations are designed to provide access and equity for students with disabilities, not advantage. When used appropriately, they reduce or even eliminate the effects of a student's disability; they do not reduce learning expectations. The accommodations provided to a student must be the same for classroom instruction, classroom assessments, and state assessments. It is critical to note that although some accommodations may be appropriate for instructional use, they may not be appropriate for use on a standardized assessment. There may be consequences (e.g., invalidating a student's test score) for the use of some accommodations during state assessments. It is very important for educators to become familiar with state policies regarding accommodations during assessments.

(c) In Georgia, accommodations may not alter, explain, simplify, paraphrase, or eliminate any test item, reading passage, writing prompt, or answer option. Further, accommodations may not provide verbal or other clues or suggestions that hint at or give away the correct response to the student.

(d) Typically, accommodation use does not begin and end in school. Students who use accommodations will generally also need them at home, in the community, and as they get older, in postsecondary education, and at work. Accommodations for instruction and assessment are integrally intertwined. However, some accommodations are appropriate for instruction and not assessment. (adapted from the Georgia DOE Accommodations Manual)

(e) When necessary, ESS case managers, 504 coordinators and ELL staff may develop testing accommodations as part of individual student plans, but in accordance with the accommodations definition above. Those monitoring student plans must be mindful of accommodation needs in all aspects of instruction and not only for assessment.

(f) For any system required testing (MAP, GMAS-EOG, GHSWT, etc.) new accommodations should be added to individual student plans (IEP, 504 or ELL) prior to 30 calendar days before the scheduled test. Staff is encouraged to always consider the need for any special instructional and testing accommodations as plans are developed or reviewed.

(8) The projected dates for initiation of services and modifications and the anticipated frequency, duration, and location, i.e., regular education environment or special education environment, for the services and modifications. Frequency of service may not include yearly ranges, but must fully inform the committee and the parents of how much and how often on a periodic basis the services will be provided.

(a) A statement of how the student's parent(s)/guardian(s)/surrogate parents(s) will be regularly informed of their child's progress toward the annual goals and of the extent to which the progress is sufficient to achieve the goals by the end of the effective date of the IEP. Progress shall be reported at least as often as it is to the parents of students without disabilities. The IEP shall determine if ESY services are necessary to provide a free and appropriate education (FAPE). In doing so, it shall consider if the student requires extended school year services to benefit from his/her special education services. The IEP team considers ESY for all students with disabilities. ESY is provided at no cost.

(9) If the IEP Committee determines that ESY is required, the IEP team indicates:

- (a) Which goals are being extended or modified deliver FAPE.
- (b) The specific services needed.
- (c) The amount of time for each service.
- (d) The beginning and ending dates for the services.
- (e) The service provider and location.

k. City Schools of Decatur shall develop, review and revise an IEP for every student with a disability annually or more often, as needed. The IEP Committee shall review and revise the IEP, as appropriate, to address:

- (1) Whether the annual goals are being achieved;
- (2) Lack of expected progress toward annual goals or in the general curriculum, if appropriate;
- (3) Re-evaluation results;
- (4) Information provided by or to the student's parent(s)/guardian(s)/surrogate parents(s);
- (5) Anticipated needs or other matters; and
- (6) Special factors related to behavior, limited English proficiency, Braille, communication, needs of deaf students, and assistive technology.

7. Transition Services for young children

a. For young children with disabilities who are receiving services from the Part C, early intervention program, transition from these services to the local school system program shall begin at least 90

calendar days and may begin up to 6 months, before the child's third birthday.

b. City Schools of Decatur personnel shall participate in the transition conference arranged by Part C, early intervention personnel, with the approval of the child's parents, at a mutually agreed upon time. This conference is held to determine the steps to be taken in order to ensure a smooth and effective transition for a child, possibly eligible for special education services, who is exiting from the Part C, early intervention program and entering the local school system.

c. The IEP for a preschool student with a disability who is being placed in special education for the first time shall be in effect within a reasonable time following City Schools of Decatur's receipt of the parental consent for evaluation. Within the reasonable time period, the student must be evaluated and, if determined to be eligible, an IEP must be developed and special education and related services must be made available in accordance with the IEP. A reasonable amount of time is defined as:

(1) When the signed parental consent for evaluation is received on or more than 60 calendar days before the child's third birthday by City Schools of Decatur, the IEP/Placement meeting shall be held by the child's third birthday. Unless otherwise agreed, a maximum of 60 calendar days shall elapse between receipt of parent's(s)/guardian's(s)/surrogate's(s) consent for initial evaluation and the completion of the IEP. The winter and spring holiday period, when students are not in attendance for at least five consecutive days, shall not be counted toward the 60 calendar day timeline. If the consent for evaluation is received 30 or more days prior to the end of the teacher contract period, the 60-day calendar must be followed. The calendar days during the summer vacation period, when the majority of CSD's teachers are not on contract, do not count toward the 60 day timeline, except that:

(a) If the consent for evaluation is received 30 or more days prior to the end of the teacher contract period, the 60-day calendar must be followed. If extenuating circumstances, e.g., illness, unusual evaluation needs, revocation of parent's(s)/guardian's(s) /surrogate's(s) consent for evaluation, affect this time line, the system shall document the exceptions.

d. For an eligible preschool student with a disability who turns three during the summer months and whose IEP Committee has determined needs extended school year services, an appropriate IEP or Individual Family Services Plan (IFSP) must be developed. The IFSP may serve as the initial IEP if agreed to by the parents and the system. In order to use the IFSP as an initial IEP, the system shall provide the child's parent(s)/guardian(s)/surrogate parent(s) a detailed explanation of the differences between an IFSP and IEP. If the parent chooses an IFSP, written informed consent must be obtained from the parent(s)/guardian(s)/surrogate parent(s).

8. Transition Services for older students

a. The IEP for each student, beginning at age 14 (or younger if determined appropriate) shall include a statement of the transition service needs of the student under the applicable components of the student's IEP that focuses on the student's courses of study, such as participation in advanced-placement courses or a vocational education program.

b. For each student at age 16 (or younger, if appropriate) a statement of needed transition services including the following:

(1) If appropriate, a statement of interagency responsibilities or any needed linkages.

(2) Transition services which means a coordinated set of activities for a student, designed within an outcome-oriented process, that promotes movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational training, integrated employment, supported employment, continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living or community participation. The coordinated set of activities must be based on the student's needs, taking into account the student's preferences and interests and include Instruction, Related services, and Community experiences.

(3) The development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives.

(4) If appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.

c. Transition services for students with disabilities may be special education, if provided as specially designed instruction or related services, if required to assist a student with a disability to benefit from special education.

d. This statement shall be reviewed and updated, as appropriate, at least annually. The statement of transition services may also be included for students younger than age 16 if the IEP Committee decides to do so.

e. Agency Responsibilities for Transition Services.

(1) If a participating agency fails to provide agreed upon transition services contained in the IEP, the system responsible for the student's education shall, as soon as possible, initiate a meeting for the purpose of identifying alternative strategies to meet the transition objectives and, if necessary, revising the student's IEP. A participating agency is a state or local agency other than the school system that is financially and legally responsible for providing transition services.

(2) Nothing in these Rules relieves any participating agency, including a state vocational rehabilitation agency, of the responsibility to provide or pay for any transition service that the agency would otherwise provide to students with disabilities who meet the eligibility criteria of that agency.

f. Summary of Performance

(1) The Summary of Performance (SOP) is required under the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA) and requires the following: “For a child whose eligibility under special education terminates due to graduation with a regular diploma, or due to exceeding the age of eligibility, City Schools of Decatur shall provide the child with a summary of the child’s academic achievement and functional performance, which shall include recommendations on how to assist the child in meeting the child’s postsecondary goals.” The SOP, with the accompanying documentation, is critical as a student transitions from high school to higher education, post-secondary training and/or employment. This information is necessary to establish a student’s eligibility for reasonable accommodations and supports in *postsecondary* settings under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

(2) The SOP is most useful when coordinated with the Georgia Performance Standards, Georgia graduation requirements, course of study and the IEP/transition plan. It must be completed during the final year of a student’s high school education. The timing for completion of the SOP may vary depending on the student’s desired postsecondary goals. For example, if a student is transitioning to higher education, the SOP, with additional documentation, may be needed as the student applies to a college or university. Likewise, this information may be needed prior to graduation as a student applies for services from agencies identified in the transition plan. For other students, it may be appropriate to wait until the spring of a student’s last year in school to finalize the information on the performance of the student.

(3) When developing the SOP, the student should actively participate. Other IEP team members, family members or other community agencies involved in this student’s transition planning process should also provide input. The SOP becomes the student’s résumé as he or she transitions to postsecondary settings.

(4) Sections in the SOP

(a) **Part 1: Student Information** – Complete this section as specified. Please note this section you are requested to provide copies of the most recent formal and informal assessment reports that document the student’s disability and provides information to assist in post-high school planning.

(b) **Part 2: Student's Postsecondary Goals** – These goals should indicate the post-school environment or environments in which the student intends to transition upon completion of his/her high school education. These goals should address education, employment, independent living and community access, as appropriate for the student.

(c) **Part 3: Present Levels of Performance Summary** – This section includes two critical areas of student performance: Academic and Functional Levels of Performance. Next to each academic or functional area, please complete the student's present level of performance, the accommodations used and the rationale for why those accommodations are necessary. When listing accommodations include any accommodation, modification, assistive technology or other supports used to assist the student in achieving success in this area. Include specific details about each accommodation, such as 30 minutes extra time instead of simply extra time. In the rationale section, provide the explanation of how the student's disability impacted his or her performance such that the listed accommodations were necessary for success.

An *Accommodation* is defined as a support or service that is provided to help a student fully access the general education curriculum or subject matter. An accommodation *does not change the content* of what is being taught or the expectation that the student meet a performance standard applied for all students. A *Modification* is defined as a change to the general education curriculum, which changes the standards or expectations for students. *Assistive Technology* is defined as any device that helps a student with a disability function in a given environment, and includes "low tech" or "high-tech" options.

(d) **Part 4: Recommendations to Assist the Student in Meeting Post Secondary Goals** – This section should present suggestions for accommodations, adaptive devices, assistive devices, assistive services, compensatory strategies, modifications, or general areas of need that a student will require to be successful in a post-high school environment, including higher education, training, employment, independent living and/or community participation.

(e) **Part 5: Student Perspective** - The student provides information for the development of this SOP. The student's contribution can help (a) secondary professionals complete the summary, (b) the student to better understand the impact of his/her disability on academic and functional performance in the postsecondary setting, and (c) postsecondary personnel to more clearly understand the impact of the disability on this student. This section may be filled out independently by the student or completed with the student through an interview.

(f) **Part 6: Postsecondary Community Agency Contacts, Team Members, and Supports** - The Transition Team should provide all the necessary contact information to help the student as he or she transitions to postsecondary settings.

9. Transfer of Rights

- a. Beginning at least one year before the student reaches the age of majority (age 18), a statement that the student and the parent have

been informed of the rights that will transfer at age 18 must be included in the IEP. This statement must be included unless such student had been determined to be incompetent through the judicial process.

b. For more information, consult the State Board Rule 160-4-7-.13 Transfer of Parental Rights at Age of Majority.

10. Policy for Students turning 22 years of age

- a. Students can attend school up to the day before they turn 22 years old.
- b. Students can participate in senior activities and graduation the year prior to their 22nd birthday if they turn 22 in the fall, the year of their 22nd birthday if they turn 22 in the spring.

11. Assistive Technology

a. Students with disabilities who require assistive technology in order to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE) are eligible for assistive technology devices and services.

b. Assistive technology device. Any item, piece of equipment or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified or customized that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of students with disabilities.

c. Assistive technology service. Any service that assists a student with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device. Assistive technology services include:

(1) Evaluating the needs of a student with a disability, including a functional technology evaluation of the student in the student's customary environment;

(2) Purchasing, leasing, or otherwise providing for the acquisition of assistive technology devices by students with disabilities;

(3) Selecting, designing, fitting, customizing, adapting, applying, retaining, repairing, or replacing assistive technology devices;

(4) Coordinating and using other therapies, interventions, or services with assistive technology devices, such as those associated with existing education and rehabilitation plans and programs;

(5) Training or technical assistance for a students with a disability or, if appropriate, that child's family; and

(6) Training or technical assistance for professionals, employers, or other individuals who provide services to employ, or otherwise substantially involved in the major life functions of students with disabilities.

d. Assistive technology may be provided as a part of the student's special education services, related services, or supplemental aids and services.

e. Process for Assistive Technology Support for Teachers

(1) Request for Assistance is made

(a) A teacher or therapist makes a request for assistance to the ESS administrative assistant.

(b) A AT Assistance Request Packet is sent to the referring teacher/therapist including the AT considerations checklist.

(c) The referring teacher/therapist is put on the agenda for the monthly AT meeting.

(2) Assistive Technology Team Meeting

(a) Referring teacher/therapist presents the student

(b) Team review AT Checklist, work samples and makes recommendations:

(i) Instructional strategies, modification, accommodations to try.

(ii) A trial use of assistive technology

(iii) An assistive technology evaluation.

(c) An action plan to support the teacher/therapist is developed.

(d) Follow up is scheduled for the teacher to present the results.

(3) If a trial use was recommended, the needed technology is provided

(a) Identify what is needed to implement the recommendation.

(b) Obtain and prepare technology.

(c) Deliver technology and train teacher.

(4) Follow up presentation

(a) Teacher/Therapist returns to the AT team to discuss how the recommendations worked and next steps.

(b) The AT team requested the recommended equipment from the Director of ESS.

f. Each IEP Committee will consider whether or not a student requires assistive technology in order to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE). Minimal compliance will be indicating the appropriate response in the Consideration of Special Factors section of the IEP. Assistive technology can also be addressed when considering other factors such as communication needs and instruction in the use of Braille.

g. An assistive technology assessment may be required if appropriate assistive technology solutions are not known to the student's IEP Committee through the consideration process. This assessment shall be conducted by a multidisciplinary team of professionals knowledgeable about assistive technology devices in the technology areas being assessed. The student and his or her family

should also be included in this process. The assessment should result in recommendations for assistive technology devices and services.

h. If the student’s IEP Committee determines that assistive technology devices or services are required for the student to receive FAPE, a statement to that effect must be included in the student’s IEP.

i. If assistive technology is required for the student to participate in district-wide or statewide testing, the need for technology should be documented in the appropriate section of the IEP and provided to the student.

j. If the IEP Committee determines that the student with a disability requires school purchased assistive technology at home or in other settings to receive FAPE, the assistive technology must be provided to the student at no cost to the parent. The need for assistive technology in the non-school settings(s) should be documented in the student’s IEP.

12. Private Schools

a. In Georgia, all references to parentally placed children in private schools also include children who are homeschooled by parental choice for the purposes of special education. Local systems have the responsibility to identify all the private schools and home schools in their district and conduct child find activities with them to identify eligible children. Once the children are located, the system must conduct meaningful consultation with the private and home school entities and then provide service spending the proportionate amount of federal funds for those students. A worksheet for determining the amount is provided annually with the comprehensive plan. Systems must annually report the number of children evaluated under Child Find who are either parentally placed in private schools or are homeschooled, the number of those children found eligible for special education and related services and the number of children who are actually served under this section of the law.

b. City Schools of Decatur abides by the procedures and requirements delineated in State Board Rule 160-4-7.15 Private Schools

Private School Residency Responsibilities For 3 and 4-Year-Olds* Attending Preschool/Daycare Outside Their Home District

	District of Residence	Private School District
SST	Yes	No
Initial Evaluation	Yes	No
Eligibility	Yes	No
FAPE Offered	Yes	No
Service Plan	Yes	N/A

**3 and 4 year old children attending preschools connected to elementary schools are treated the same as 5-21 children*

**Private School Residency Responsibilities
For 5-21-Year-Olds Attending Schools
Outside Their Home District**

	District of Residence	Private School District
SST	No	Yes
Initial & Reevaluations Evaluation	No	Yes
Eligibility	No	Yes
FAPE Offered	Yes	No
Service Plan	No	Yes

Remember: If districts are going to share eligibility data and reports, they must first secure permission to release/obtain records from the parents.

The district of residence always has some responsibility to conduct child find for any of its residents. When a child is enrolled in a private school in another district, then both districts have an obligation and they must work together so as to not delay access to the child find activities.

c. Process for Private Schools

(1) Private Schools will send a representative to a meeting in August to cover the following topics

- (a) Child Find
- (b) Proportionate share funds
- (c) Requesting meaningful consultation
- (d) Setting up an Academic Improvement Plan
- (e) Progress Monitoring
- (f) Preparing a packet for Central Review

(2) Private schools will contact the ESS department to schedule a consultation, when they have a concern about a student.

(3) Target skills will be defined, interventions developed, implemented, and progress will be monitored.

(4) CSD staff will have a follow up consultation to review progress monitoring data.

(5) If students are not responding to intervention, the private school will prepare a packet for central review.

13. Student Management, Discipline, and Suspension/Expulsion

- a. City Schools of Decatur uses the guidance found in State Board Rule 160-4-7-.10 Student Management, Discipline, and Suspension/Expulsion.
- b. A student with disabilities whose conduct is problematic may have a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) completed and a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) that identifies and addresses specific problem behaviors and describes the interventions planned to address these behaviors in the classroom. The plan also describes the antecedent strategies, alternative behaviors, possible consequences for unacceptable behaviors, and ongoing data collection. If the BIP is part of an IEP or a 504 Plan, it will be developed at an IEP meeting or an SST/504 meeting and must be agreed upon by the team. A BIP may provide that a student with a disability be subject to the same consequences as a student without a disability.
- c. If a student with a disability violates the City Schools of Decatur Code of Conduct, the student can be removed from the class or school for up to a 10-day period (to the extent that this consequence would be applied to students without disabilities). The Code of Conduct applies to students with Disabilities unless the IEP provides that it does not apply. Removal from the class or school for up to a 10-day period during a school year does not constitute a change in placement for a student with an IEP. IDEA does not prohibit a school district from reporting a crime committed by a student with a disability to appropriate authorities.

In School Suspension (ISS) counts toward the 10 day period when students with disabilities do not have access to the general curriculum and to progress toward the goals in the IEP in ISS. If students with disabilities have access to the general curriculum and progress toward IEP goals in ISS, it does not count toward the 10 day period that constitutes a change in placement.

- d. When a student is removed for more than 10 school days the IEP team must determine appropriate services that allow the student to continue to participate in general education curriculum and progress toward meeting the goals outlined the student's IEP. Parents must be notified immediately of disciplinary actions beyond 10 days and provided with procedural safeguards.
- e. A Manifestation Determination Review considers whether or not there is a relationship between the student's disability and the behavior subject to the disciplinary action. A manifestation determination review must be held when a student with a disability engages in a behavior that could result in suspension or placement in an alternate educational program for more than 10 days total during a school year. Suspension(s) and/or alternative placement(s) totaling more than 10 days in a school year constitute a change of placement; consequently, due process procedures apply. This meeting must be held as soon as possible, but no later than 10 days after a determination has been made that a change of placement may occur.

f. The manifestation review is to be conducted by the IEP team and other qualified personnel. If the team determines that the behavior of the student with a disability was not a manifestation of the student's disability, the relevant disciplinary procedure applicable to students without disabilities may be applied. If the conduct is found to be related to and/or caused by the disability, the committee must review the IEP goals, FBA, BIP, placement considerations, and make a determination whether or not changes need to be made to the IEP.

g. If the student behavior is not determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability, the same disciplinary actions can be imposed on the student with a disability as those imposed on any student. If these actions include expulsion, the IEP team must determine how the student will continue to receive educational services that allow the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum and progress toward meeting the goals in the IEP. If the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability, the IEP team determines the appropriate disciplinary actions.

h. Parents may challenge manifestation determination or any decision regarding placement with a right to have an expedited due process hearing. Parents can initiate the appeal process by checking the appropriate box on the manifestation form.

i. The school is permitted to remove a student with a disability to an interim alternative educational setting for up to 45 days for behaviors involving weapons, drugs, or serious bodily injury even if the behavior is a manifestation of the disability. The alternative educational setting should be determined by the IEP team and selected in order to provide services and modifications that will enable the student to continue to participate in the general curriculum, to meet the goals in the IEP, and to address the student's problem behavior.

14. Independent Educational Evaluations

15. Child Find

a. City Schools of Decatur uses the state procedures for Child Find found in State Board Rule 160-4-7.03.

b. Child Find Preschool Screening Procedures:

(1) Four screenings are conducted annually at the College Heights Early Childhood Learning Center (CHECLC).

(2) Parents contact the receptionist at CHECLC (404-370-4480) to have their child's name on the roster for the next screening. The receptionist will request basic identifying information.

(3) On the screening date, parents will bring their children to CHECLC at the appointed time. Children will be screened in the following areas:

- (a) Vision and hearing
- (b) Motor development
- (c) Speech and language skills
- (d) Play and social skills
- (e) Pre-academic skills

(4) Parents will also complete a social and developmental history and a survey of social/emotional functioning.

(5) The screening team reviews all information and then provides feedback to parents and, if applicable, private preschool centers on the next steps recommended supporting the child. Those steps may include intervention strategies and/or comprehensive evaluation to determine eligibility for special education services.

(2) School Child Find Activities will include but not be limited to:

- (a) a. Education at Faculty meetings on the child find requirements.
- (b) Universal screening procedures at each school

- (i) (1) Review of MAP data

- (ii) Review of other classroom assessments (DRA, Spelling Inventories, Dibbles, etc).

- (c) Review of enrollment forms and documents for medical or other information indicating a disability.

- (i) School nurse or teacher will contact parent to discuss the needs of the student.

- (ii) Principal will be informed of the issue

- (iii) The Director of Exceptional Student Education and Pupil Services, School level 504 coordinator or school psychologist will be informed as appropriate.

- (d) Teacher Direct Report

- (i) If a teacher observes characteristics of a disability in a student in his/her class, they will inform their Principal.

- (ii) The Principal call the Director or Coordinator of Exceptional Education to observe the student.

- (iii) If the student displays a severe disability, SST bypass will be discussed.

- (iv) If the suspected disability is not severe, Exceptional Education staff will provide consultation and support the development of interventions through the RTI process

(3) Community IDEA Child find Activities

- (a) Private Schools attend a meeting in the fall to learn about the RtI process and child find requirements. Advertisements in local publications occur throughout the school year with contact information for the Exceptional Education Administrators.

- (b) Regular communication with birth to 3-year old providers facilitates collaboration with Babies Can't Wait.

16. Revocation of Parental Consent to Services

- a. If, any time subsequent to the initial provision of special education and related services, the parent of a child revokes consent in writing for the continued provision of special education and related services, CSD may not continue to provide special education and related services to the child, but must provide prior written notice before ceasing the provision of special education and related services.

17. Transfer of Rights

- a. At age 18, students become their own educational decision makers, unless a court decides they are not able to make these decisions. On or before a student's 17th birthday, case managers will inform the parents and the student that, at age 18, the student attains the age of majority in Georgia and will become his or her own educational decision maker. Resources will be provided to inform parents regarding information about guardianships, powers of attorney, and any other options. For example, it may be that for some students, a guardianship or a more limited form of transfer of rights would be necessary. Beginning at age 18, CSD will send all notices to both the parent and the student, but the student will provide informed written consent for any action requested by the district. When the student turns 18, he or she becomes the educational decision maker; but, while the student is eligible under the IDEA, the parents retain the rights to all notices of meetings, notices of changes in program or placement, and notices of evaluations.

18. Complaints, Mediations, and Hearing Procedure

- a. City Schools of Decatur abides by State Board Rules 160-4-7.16 Mediation, 160-4-7.17 Complaint Process, and 160-4-7-.18 Hearing Procedures.
- b. The Checklist for Responding to Due Process Hearing Requests is available on the CSD website with all the PPP appendices.

19. Confidentiality of Personally Identifiable Information

- a. City Schools of Decatur will follow all rules and regulations regarding confidentiality of personally identifiable information as defined in State Board Rule 160-4-7-.12.

20. Consent for Release

- a. Every effort will be made to insure that the parent/guardian/surrogate has been informed of the information in the student's records and that granting of consent for release of these records is voluntary.

b. Procedure for Release

(1) City Schools of Decatur receives an Authorization to Release Information signed by the parent/guardian/surrogate, and indicating the address of the person or agency to whom records are to be sent.

(2) If the release is received by the ESS Office, the office requests the local school to provide academic records and sends all records together from the ESS Office.

(3) If the release is received by the local school, the school copies academic records and sends them to the ESS Office. The ESS Office sends all records together.

(4) A record of authorization to release and the date of release is maintained in the student's Special Education folder.

(5) If a signed release of information cannot be obtained from a parent/guardian/surrogate, the Director of Special Education may, at his/her discretion, sign the authorization to release records and forward records to any requesting public school system in Georgia.

21. Distribution of Records

a. Academic information applicable to all students is kept in the student's cumulative folder.

b. Individual Psychological Reports should be kept in a locked file.

c. Placement records and files including the referral, evaluation, staffing minutes, original IEP, reports from other agencies, test protocols and other pertinent information are kept in a locked file in the ESS Office. Referrals in process are kept in a separate locked file in the Special Education Office.

d. Each special education provider will keep a work file on each of his/her students containing a copy of the IEP, academic test protocols, end of year reports and any other pertinent information. These files must be locked.

22. Housing Student Records

a. The file in the ESS Office shall include the following:

(1) the referral form/AIP data

(2) permission to evaluate

(3) hearing and vision screening report(s)

(4) evaluation reports and/or protocols

- (5) staffing minutes
- (6) eligibility report(s)
- (7) copies of IEPs
- (8) permission to place
- (9) due process checklist
- b. other records that may be on file are the following:
 - (1) permission to dismiss
 - (2) pertinent correspondence
 - (3) revocation of consent
 - (4) records from other sources
- c. The cumulative folder in the individual school shall include the following:
 - (1) registration form
 - (2) enrollment and cumulative sheet
 - (3) permanent scholastic record
 - (4) test information
 - (5) summary of conferences
 - (6) written communications between home and school
 - (7) student pictures
 - (8) deficiency cards
 - (9) copy of birth certificate
 - (10) health record

23. Destruction of Special Education Records

- a. The ESS Administrative Assistant will coordinate the destruction of special education records through the following process:
 - (1) Send destruction letters by November 1 to last known address for students who have reached the age of 22 by December 31 of the same year.
 - (2) Submit public notice to the Public Information Officer to publish as a legal ad. The ad will run for four weeks prior to destruction date.

(3) Allow parents/guardians/students to contact the ESS Department by the last day prior to Winter Break of the same year to request their records.

(4) If records are requested, complete a records transfer form and have parent/guardian/student sign upon pick up of records.

(5) Upon return from Winter Break, records from returned letters and those who have not made contact with the ESS office will be destroyed.

b. Psychological and speech/language testing protocols and records will be kept by the district for an additional school year following the school year in which the tests were administered.

B. Gifted

1. State requirement

a. The City Schools of Decatur recognizes the need to provide every student with an education based on individual needs. Under Georgia Board of Education (GBOE) Rule 160-4-2-.38, a gifted student is one who “demonstrates a high degree of intellectual and/or creative abilities, exhibits an exceptionally high degree of motivation, and/or excels in specific academic fields, and who needs special instruction and/or ancillary services to achieve at levels commensurate with his or her abilities.”

2. The name for the gifted education service programs

a. The elementary gifted program is called LINKS. This name symbolizes the extra links or connections that a gifted student needs to make the chain of their educational experiences meaningful.

b. The middle and high school program is called BRIDGES. Similar to links, this name symbolizes connections that gifted students will need to make the journey of their educational experience meaningful. Both names are symbolic of the need that gifted students present for extension of learning beyond what is appropriate for typical students of the same age/grade.

3. Purposes of gifted programs

a. Students will demonstrate continuous academic progress in identified areas of strength.

b. Students will develop their higher order thinking, research, problem solving and organizational skills through creatively productive work in areas of their interest.

c. Students will develop affective skills to be able to work productively with others.

4. Identifying gifted learners

a. Classroom Talent Survey

(1) All staffs will engage in professional learning about the behavioral characteristics of gifted learners and intervention strategies for gifted learners prior to September 1.

(2) After characteristics training and before October all certified teachers (classroom teachers, specials teachers, support teachers, ESOL teachers, ESS teachers, and teachers of the gifted) will be asked to observe students in their classes in light of the characteristics listed on the Classroom Talent Survey in the areas of Mental Ability, Achievement, Creativity, and Motivation.

(3) All certified teachers will complete a Talent Survey for each student who they think exhibits most of the characteristics in two or more areas on the survey: mental ability, achievement, motivation, or creativity. In order to enter a student on the survey, a teacher must begin a Recommendation for Review Form (found on the reverse side of the Talent Survey).

(4) Certified teachers will collect and maintain samples of exceptional work and/or recorded observations of the students whose names they enter on the talent survey.

(5) Every certified teacher in each school building will confirm participation in the Classroom Talent Survey by October 1, even if no students are identified.

(6) Classroom teachers will complete the Recommendation for Review form, Gifted Intervention Form (if in Kindergarten), and submit work samples to the System-wide Review Committee for all students for whom they completed Talent Surveys.

b. Review

(1) Teachers, parents, counselors, administrators, peers, or the student can obtain a Recommendation for Review from the school's principal, counselor, gifted specialist or on the CSD website.

(2) The Recommendation for Review, should be completed according to directions and returned to the gifted specialist at each school, with samples of the student's work, before November 1. Only the Recommendation for Review form and student work samples will be accepted. No Additional information will be accepted. Student work that is submitted will not be returned. The System-wide Review Team will meet to determine if referral for further evaluation is needed. If the Review Team determines that further evaluation is needed, the student moves into the referral process.

(3) A decision making team consisting of the regular education teacher, gifted specialist, building administrator and parents must meet to discuss interventions and modifications in the regular

classroom **prior to** completing a Recommendation for Review for students in kindergarten. The System-wide Review Committee will review Kindergarten only after the following has occurred:

- (a) Parents/guardians have a discussion with the K teacher about the student's needs.
- (b) Teachers implement interventions/modifications in the regular classroom to address the student's needs.
- (c) Progress monitoring data has been collected on specific skills that have been identified for intervention.
- (d) The decision making team meets to further support the student. The decision making team will recommend review if appropriate.

(4) The System-wide Review Team will review existing data including: data from the Student Talent Survey, classroom assessment data (DRA, math pre-tests and end of unit assessments, STAR tests), standardized achievement data (MAP K-10), and mental ability data (CogAT grades, 4, and 6). To be referred for evaluation students must exhibit two of the following.

- (a) above grade level classroom performance as evidenced by classroom data or work samples
- (b) achievement scores at or above the 90th percentile rank on Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) in the areas of reading or math
- (c) mental ability scores at or above the 96th percentile rank
- (d) student's teacher endorsed two different areas on the student's classroom talent survey and the ratings are supported by evidence

(5) For parent referrals only, Gifted: Reviewed, Not Referred will be sent to inform parents of students Reviewed and not referred for evaluation.

(6) If additional evaluation is recommended, parents are given a Consent to Evaluate. The evaluation may include tests of mental ability, achievement, and creativity, or rating scales to assess motivation. Once written consent to evaluate is provided, the evaluation will be conducted in totality. The testing coordinator will work with the school to identify times for testing. Parents will not be informed of the dates and times.

(7) Students who have been retained may not be referred for gifted evaluation in the same year of retention.

c. Reported Referrals (The Referral Process)

(1) The gifted specialist reviews existing assessment data, recording valid data already in the student's files. If additional evaluation is recommended, parents are given a Consent to Evaluate Form. The evaluation may include tests of mental ability, achievement, and creativity, or rating scales to assess motivation. Once written consent to evaluate is provided, the evaluation will be conducted in totality. The testing coordinator will work with the school to identify times for testing. Parents will not be informed of the dates and times.

(2) The Eligibility Team (gifted specialist, principal, system-wide gifted program staff) considers the data collected on each student. The Eligibility Report, is completed for each referred student to determine if he or she qualifies for gifted services. A Notification of Eligibility, or a Notification of Non-eligibility, must be filled out for each student, indicating whether or not the student has met the program criteria. The appropriate form along with the Eligibility Report, is sent home to parents of all referred students. Parents whose children are eligible receive a copy of the school's program description, and Continuation Criteria.

(3) Written consent for placement from parent/guardian is necessary before students determined to be eligible can receive gifted education services.

(4) A child may be referred for evaluation only one time in the following grade clusters: K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9 -12. A child may only be evaluated to consider gifted eligibility a maximum of 3 times. Exceptions will be made only upon the recommendation of the district wide appeal committee. Children from underserved populations (English Language Learner, African American, Hispanic, Asian Pacific Islander, Multiracial and students living in poverty) may be evaluated one additional time.

(5) Further Explanation of Testing Windows: Because we do not want to discourage our high achieving students or have them engage in testing again and again for the purpose of gifted identification, we have set aside grade clusters in which a student may be tested for the purpose of gifted identification only one time. There are four testing windows: 1. kindergarten, first and second grades; 2. third, fourth and fifth grades; 3. sixth, seventh, and eighth grades; and 4. ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades. Test scores must be less than two calendar years old to utilize for gifted identification purposes. No student will be evaluated more than one time in a two year period. Examples: If a student is evaluated in kindergarten, they cannot be evaluated again until the 3rd grade. If a student is evaluated in 1st grade, they cannot be evaluated again until the 3rd grade. If a student is evaluated in the second grade, they cannot be evaluated again until the 4th grade. If a student is evaluated in the third grade, they cannot be evaluated again until the 6th grade. If a student is evaluated in the 4th grade, they cannot be evaluated again until the 6th grade. If a student is evaluated in the 5th grade, they cannot be evaluated again until the 7th grade. If a student is evaluated in the 6th grade, they cannot be evaluated again until the 9th grade. If a student is evaluated in the 7th grade they cannot be evaluated again until the 9th grade. If a student is evaluated in the 8th grade, they cannot be evaluated again until the 10th grade.

d. Automatic Review

(1) After system-wide testing (CogAT in grades 1, 4, and 6, MAP in grades K-10) has been completed in the fall semester, the gifted specialist or gifted coordinator will review standardized test scores

to identify students who are automatically eligible for the gifted program by scoring at or above the 96thile full scale or composite on a standardized mental abilities test using age norms and at or above 90thile on the total battery, total reading or total math section of an achievement test.

(2) The gifted testing coordinator will notify parents of students who already have scores that meet automatic gifted eligibility criteria in the areas of mental ability and academic achievement and will request signed consent to serve the student in the gifted program and to obtain rating scale data for the student in the areas of creativity and motivation. Creativity and motivation data will be for informational purposes only in order to complete a state eligibility form.

e. Evaluation

(1) Students who are referred will be evaluated after parental consent. Further data collection may be needed in the areas of mental ability, achievement, creativity, and motivation. To determine eligibility, test scores must be current within 2 calendar years. The most recent scores will be used. Outside evaluations will be considered, but will not be used to determine eligibility in the City Schools of Decatur. A student may qualify for gifted services in Georgia under the following conditions:

(a) Scores at the 99thile (K-2) or at or above the 96thile (3-12) on the overall composite or full scale score of a mental ability test **and** at or above 90thile on the total battery, total math or total reading section of an achievement test

OR

(b) Meets multiple criteria in any three of the four areas: mental ability (at or above 96thile), achievement (at or above 90th percentile rank), creativity (at or above 90th percentile rank), motivation (at or above 90th percentile rank).

(2) Mental Ability Assessment

(a) If Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) data from system- wide testing (grades 1, 4, 6,) is less than two calendar years old, those scores will be used.

(b) If the CogAT or data is more than two years old, either another CogAT will be administered or the Differential Abilities Scale, Second Edition (DAS-II) or Wechsler Intelligence scale for children Fifth Edition (WISC-V) will be used.

(c) if a student has never participated in standardized testing of mental ability, the DAS-II, WISC-V or CogAT may be administered.

(d) If the student is from one of the underrepresented populations in gifted education (English Language Learner, African American, Hispanic, Asian or pacific Islander, Multi-Racial and students living in poverty (defined by free and reduced lunch status), and the student demonstrates evidence of strength in nonverbal skills The NNAT2 may be used as a second measure of mental ability.

(e) Scores at the 99th percentile rank (K-2) or at or above the 96th percentile rank (3-12) on the composite or full scale score of a mental ability test 96th percentile rank or above are qualifying

scores. Also, if a student meets multiple criteria in any three of the four areas: mental ability at or above 96th percentile rank is a qualifying score (K-12).

(3) Achievement Assessment

(a) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) scores will be used for students in grades K-10.

(b) In grades 10 – 12, If a MAP score is not available or is older than two years old, the Woodcock Johnson, Fourth Edition (WJ-IV or KTEA -III) Test will be used.

(c) If a student's MAP score is at or above the 90th percentile rank, it is a qualifying score.

(4) Creativity and Motivation Assessment

(a) To assess creativity, City Schools of Decatur will follow these guidelines:

(i) The student will be given the Torrance Test of Creative Thinking (TTCT), figural version.

(ii) If a student scored at or above the 90th percentile, it is a qualifying score.

(iii) If the student's score is between the 80th percentile and the 89th percentile, the verbal version of the TTCT will be administered as a backup measure if the student has qualifying scores in two areas.

(iv) If a student's average score is at or above the 90th percentile rank, it is a qualifying score.

(b) To assess motivation, City Schools of Decatur will use these guidelines:

(i) The gifted specialist will distribute a copy of the Renzulli-Hartman Rating Scales for Motivation to two teachers who have worked with the student in the past year. These should be filled out individually, not as a group with shared information. Teachers' names will not be put on any form so that their identity will not be revealed to parents.

(ii) The two scores will be averaged. The average will be used to determine the student's score.

(iii) If a student's average score is at or above the 90th percentile, it is a qualifying score.

(iv) If the student's score is between the 80th percentile and the 89th percentile, the Hawthorne Gifted Evaluation Scale (GES) or the Gifted Rating Scale (GRS) will be distributed to two teachers (who have worked with the student within the past year) as a second measure.

f. **Withdrawal of Consent:** If after providing written consent, a parent wishes to withdraw their consent for evaluation, they must write a letter to the gifted coordinator stating that they withdraw their consent. Any testing that has occurred up to that point will be communicated to the

parent using the gifted eligibility form. If any evaluation has occurred, the evaluation will be considered one of the three times that students may be evaluated for the purpose of gifted eligibility.

g. Appeal Process After Evaluation is Complete

(1) Appeals for additional evaluation may be made to the System Wide Appeals Committee via the Coordinator of Exceptional Student Services within 30 days of receipt of testing results using the Appeal for Additional Evaluation Form which can be found on the CSD website. The eligibility report and supporting documentation must be submitted with this form.

(2) After evaluation, parents, teachers, or administrators may appeal for additional evaluation (a back up measure) if they present compelling evidence that renders a particular measure invalid **and** there is compelling evidence of giftedness in **two** of the other three areas assessed. If a student has a composite mental ability score (on a test such as the CogAT) and compelling evidence of creativity is presented, then an appeal to further evaluate creativity may be made.

(a) Examples of evidence that might render a test invalid: a doctors not confirming the child was not well on the day of testing, teacher observation of illness during the test, documentation of family trauma the week of testing.

(b) Examples of evidence of giftedness in the four areas:

(i) Achievement: Consistent achievement scores above the 90th percentile rank across three administrations of the MAP test

(ii) Creativity: TTCT scores above the 90th percentile rank,

(iii) Motivation: Rating scale scores above the 90th percentile rank.

(iv) Mental Ability: standardized test scores above the 96th percentile rank.

(3) Appeals will be carefully considered by a district wide appeals committee. This committee is chaired by the Superintendent of Schools and includes the Gifted Coordinator and another central office administrator. This team will decide what additional measures will be administered.

(4) If an appeal is granted, parents will sign consent for additional evaluation. The evaluation will occur during the next cycle of gifted evaluation. The evaluation that follows will be considered one of the three times a student may be evaluated for the purpose of gifted eligibility.

h. Transfer Students

(1) If a student transfers into City Schools of Decatur, several factors must be taken into account, including the age level of the student, the time of the year that he or she enters, and the system from which he or she is transferring. The gifted coordinator will review enrollment records to identify transferred gifted students.

(2) The receiving school must have records that indicate the student was being served in a gifted program (honors or Advanced Placement does not equate with gifted) in his or her previous school and was in good standing at the time of transfer. Until documentation verifying that the student was receiving gifted services can be provided, the student will not be placed in gifted classes. This documentation is:

- (a) Gifted eligibility report
- (b) Continuation form that is less than one year old or evidence in the state wide longitudinal data system of gifted status and gifted courses.

(3) If the records indicate that he or she was receiving gifted services and the student is transferring from a system in Georgia, the child is placed in the City Schools of Decatur gifted program with no evaluation needed. If the time of the year or the age of the child makes entering a class at that time undesirable, the placement will be made at the next appropriate grading period.

(4) If records are received that indicate the student was receiving gifted services, but is transferring from outside the state of Georgia, the student must meet Georgia and City Schools of Decatur criteria. Review of this student's records will occur during the gifted review window (November or March).

(5) If valid test scores (within two years) are available in all four areas that Georgia requires and would meet Georgia/City Schools of Decatur criteria, the student can be placed, providing that entering the class at that time is desirable in light of evaluation/report cards. If not, place the student at the next appropriate grading period.

(6) If test scores available are not valid (older than two years) or do not meet Georgia criteria and further evaluation is needed for gifted eligibility, the student will enter the review process at the next review window.

5. Probation, Continuation, Withdrawal, Reinstatement

a. Parents or guardians of a student may receive written notification of problems that indicate that the student is not achieving at acceptable levels.

b. If a student does not maintain an overall average of 80 or demonstrate growth in their area of strength (for schools using the standards based report card) the parents/guardians will be notified in writing.

- c. Academic performance or behavior has changed significantly and a conference to discuss improvement is needed.
- d. Steps for the probationary period are included in the Continuation Policy
- e. If a student is withdrawn from the gifted program, a parent conference must be scheduled to discuss the situation.
- f. If there is a break in gifted education services due to voluntary withdrawal (home school, private school, moving out of state/country, etc.), reinstatement in the program is possible under the following circumstances:
 - (1) Students within the City Schools of Decatur may be reinstated after a one year break in service if they meet continuation criteria.
 - (2) If the break in service is longer than one year, the student must enter the review process, if test scores are older than 2 years. The new test scores must meet state criteria.
 - (3) Parents/guardians seeking reinstatement of gifted education services for a student who has had a one-year break, need to send a letter to Gifted Services. Upon receipt of the letter, eligibility will be considered using the state criteria.
 - (4) Parents/guardians seeking reinstatement of gifted education for a student who has had longer than a year break must complete a Recommendation for Review and enter the review process.

6. Placing gifted learners

- a. If eligible for gifted services, the student will be placed at the next appropriate grading period.
- b. Placement in the middle of a grading period may only occur when entering the class at that time is desirable in light of evaluation and scheduling. If mid-semester placement will be disruptive to the student or the class, placement of the student will occur at the next appropriate grading period.

7. Delivery Models

- a. Service is needs-based, so not every student will participate in every model.
- b. K – 5: Targeting academic progress
 - (1) Cluster group (Direct Service)
 - (a) Small group of identified gifted students placed as a group into an otherwise heterogeneous regular classroom.
 - (b) Regular classroom teacher has the gifted endorsement.
 - (c) Teacher documents curriculum modifications made for gifted learners

(i) separate lesson plans

(ii) Individual student contracts.

(2) Collaborative Teaching (Indirect Service)

(a) Direct instruction may be provided by a regular classroom teacher.

(b) Substantial, regularly scheduled collaborative planning between the content area teacher and the gifted specialist.

(c) Gifted Specialist documents curriculum modifications made for gifted learners and collaborative time.

(i) Separate lesson plans

(ii) Individual student contracts

(iii) log of collaborative time

(d) High achieving students will also be served.

(3) Flexible Learning Groups (Collaborative Model)

(a) Gifted Endorsed Teacher directly teach one group

(b) Formative assessment is utilized to form groups

(c) Groups must change for each unit of study

(d) Gifted endorsed teacher must document planning of groups.

(i) Lesson plan

(ii) Collaborative planning log

(4) Resource

(a) Identified gifted students and identified high-potential students from under-represented populations only

(b) Limited class size 21.

(c) Teacher must have gifted endorsement.

(d) Curriculum with an academic content foundation but an Interdisciplinary enrichment focus that provides students with opportunities to engage in work that develops target skills and results in creative products.

(e) Content and pacing differentiated to the degrees that activities are clearly not appropriate for more typical students at that grade level.

c. 6 – 8

(1) Cluster group (Direct Service)

(a) Small group of identified gifted students placed as a group into an otherwise heterogeneous regular classroom.

(b) Regular classroom teacher has the gifted endorsement.

(c) Teacher documents curriculum modifications made for gifted learners

(i) Separate lesson plans

(ii) Individual student contracts.

(2) Collaborative Teaching (Indirect Service)

- (a) Direct instruction may be provided by a regular classroom teacher.
- (b) Substantial, regularly scheduled collaborative planning between the content area teacher and the gifted specialist.
- (c) Gifted Specialist documents curriculum modifications made for gifted learners and collaborative time.

- (i) Separate lesson plans

- (ii) Individual student contracts

- (iii) log of collaborative time

- (d) High achieving students will also be served.

(3) Content Area Acceleration (Cluster Group or Collaborative Service)

- (a) Students will be selected on the basis of achievement in a core academic area. May include students who are not identified as gifted, based on locally adopted criteria including use of an adapted version of the IOWA Acceleration Scale. Students must fall in the "Excellent Candidate" range for acceleration in order to participate.

- (b) Maximum class size 25

- (c) Student will participate in the identified content area class with the next grade level above (e.g., a sixth grader will take a seventh grade class)

- (d) Teacher qualifications: either the receiving teacher will hold the gifted endorsement or a gifted endorsed teacher will provide service to that class documenting:

- (i) Separate lesson plans

- (ii) Log of collaborative time

(4) Flexible Learning Groups (Collaborative Model)

- (a) Gifted Endorsed Teacher directly teach one group

- (b) Formative assessment is utilized to form groups

- (c) Groups must change for each unit of study

- (d) Gifted endorsed teacher must document planning of groups.

- (i) Lesson plan

- (ii) Collaborative planning log

(5) Resource (Direct Service)

- (a) Identified gifted students and identified high-potential students from under-represented populations only

- (b) Limited class size 21.

- (c) Teacher must have gifted endorsement.

- (d) Curriculum with an academic content foundation but an Interdisciplinary enrichment focus that provides students with opportunities to engage in work that develops target skills and results in creative products.

- (e) Content and pacing differentiated to the degrees that activities are clearly not appropriate for more typical students at that grade level.

d. 9 – 12

(1) Advanced content classes (Direct Service)

- (a) Homogeneously grouped on the basis of achievement in a core academic area. May include students who are not identified as gifted, based on locally adopted criteria.
- (b) Maximum class size 25
- (c) Course description shows clearly how the content, pacing, process skills emphasis, and expectations of student outcomes differ from the course more typical students at that grade level would take in that content area.
- (d) Teacher qualifications: gifted endorsement for locally identified advanced classes, College Board/IB training in that specific course plus 10 clock hours of professional learning in characteristics and curriculum differentiation for gifted students.

(2) Cluster group (Direct Service)

- (a) Small group of identified gifted students placed as a group into an otherwise heterogeneous regular classroom.
- (b) Regular classroom teacher has the gifted endorsement.
- (c) Teacher documents curriculum modifications made for gifted learners
 - (i) Separate lesson plans
 - (ii) Individual student contracts.

(3) Directed study (Direct Service)

- (a) Provide students with opportunities to engage in work that develops target skills and results in creative products.
- (b) same description as resource, class size for high school is 25

(4) Mentorship (Indirect Service)

- (a) a gifted student works with a mentor to explore a profession of interest.
- (b) The gifted specialist maintains close contact with both the participating student(s) and the selected mentor(s) to ensure acceptable progress toward the students individual learning goals
- (c) individual student contract specifying work to be done, learning objectives, and the dates.
- (d) one to two segments per day

(5) Collaborative Teaching (Indirect Service)

- (a) Direct instruction may be provided by a regular classroom teacher.
- (b) Substantial, regularly scheduled collaborative planning between the content area teacher and the gifted specialist.
- (c) Gifted Specialist documents curriculum modifications made for gifted learners and collaborative time.
 - (i) Separate lesson plans
 - (ii) Individual student contracts
 - (iii) log of collaborative time

(d) High achieving students will also be served.

8. Elementary High Potential Program

a. Students from populations that are underrepresented in gifted education (English Language Learners, African American, Hispanic, Asian or Pacific Islander, Multi-racial, or students living in poverty as defined by free and reduced lunch status

(1) Students who have a component mental ability score at or above the 96th percentile rank as documented by grade wide testing (grades 1 and 3) or through gifted evaluation and are members of the above listed underrepresented groups will be selected to participate.

(2) Parents will sign consent for participation in the high potential program.

(3) Students will participate in gifted resource class alongside gifted students in order to support their higher order thinking skills and creativity.

C. Categories used for state funding

1. Category I

a. self-contained specific learning disabled and self-contained speech-language disordered;

2. Category II

a. mildly mentally disabled;

3. Category III

a. behavior disordered, moderately mentally disabled, severely mentally disabled, resourced specific learning disabled, resourced speech-language disordered, self-contained hearing impaired and deaf, self-contained orthopedically disabled, and self-contained other health impaired;

4. Category IV

a. deaf-blind, profoundly mentally disabled, visually impaired and blind, resourced hearing impaired and deaf, resourced orthopedically disabled, and resourced other health impaired;

5. Category V

a. those special education students classified as being in Categories I through IV, as defined in this subsection whose Individualized Educational Programs specify specially designed instruction or supplementary aids or services in alternative placements, in the least restrictive environment, including the regular classroom and who

receive such services from personnel such as paraprofessionals, interpreters, job coaches, and other assistive personnel; and

6. Category VI

- a. intellectually gifted.

D. Testing

1. Student Participation in Standardized Testing

a. Students with exceptionalities are expected to participate in the state-testing program. However, if a student with a disability has a current individual educational plan (IEP) and the student demonstrates cognitive ability or behavior that prevents him/her from taking the tests even with allowable accommodations, the student may be excluded from taking the tests. If a student with a disability is determined to be excluded, the IEP must document why the assessment is not appropriate and what alternate assessment procedure will be used. This follows the requirements according to the Individuals with Disabilities Improvement Act (IDEIA) of 2004.

b. Students with disabilities may be recommended for any of the following test options, as indicated on the individual Education Plan: regular testing format, testing with accommodations, or alternate assessment.

c. Participation in alternate assessment may be permitted for selected students only when all the following criteria are met:

(1) The student's demonstrated cognitive ability and/or behavior prevent the student from completing the required coursework and achieving the Georgia State Standards and Goal 3 Student Performance Standards of the Georgia's System of School Improvement and Accountability even with appropriate and allowable course modifications.

(2) The student requires extensive direct instruction to accomplish the application and transfer skills and competencies needed for domestic, community living, leisure and vocational activities.

(3) The student's inability to complete the required coursework is not due to excessive or extended absences and is not primarily the result of social, cultural or economic differences.

(4) The student is unable to apply or use academic skills at a minimal competency level in the home, community, or work site.

(5) For students of high school age, the following criterion must also be met:

- (a) The student is unable to complete the standard diploma program even with allowable program and course modifications.
- (b) Individual Educational Plans for students who will participate in alternate assessment must reflect rationale for alternate

assessment and the name of the alternate assessment to be used.

2. Accommodations

- a. Accommodations may be provided for students identified as disabled in accordance with state or district testing programs guidelines and as indicated on the student's Individual Educational Plan.
- b. All accommodations must be approved by the Accommodations Manual, published by the Department of Education. Each standardized assessment allows specific accommodations.

E. Promotion

1. IEP progress

- a. Determination of the appropriate progression of the student enrolled in Exceptional Student Education will be based on acceptable progress towards the identified instructional objectives in compliance with the Individual Education Plan. The exceptional education teacher(s) and/or general education teacher(s) has the primary responsibility for determining each student's level of performance and ability to function academically at the next grade level subject to review and approval by the principal.

F. Administrative Assignment

1. Allowance

- a. A student with disabilities who is enrolled in exceptional education programs and who fails to complete program requirements may be administratively assigned. No student may be administratively assigned based solely on age or other factors that constitute social promotion. Administrative assignment shall be based on individual student needs as determined by the IEP review committee.
- b. Prior to determination of administrative assignment from elementary to middle school or from middle to high school, and Individual Educational Plan review shall be conducted by a District Program and Placement Specialist. The parent and representatives from the sending and receiving schools shall be invited to participate in the review. Administrative assignment shall be based on individual student needs as determined by the IEP review committee.