

Shiloh High School- Special Education and Inclusion Policy

Philosophy

Shiloh High School seeks to provide equal opportunities to include all students in a rigorous education. Shiloh High School aims to provide appropriate levels of support and intervention to allow students to maximize their abilities and achieve academic success. Our goal is to place students in courses that are the most academically appropriate setting based on student learning needs.

Categories of Services

Students with special assessment needs fall into different categories based on local, state, and national regulations. Students could be served in multiple categories, therefore, the decision on course placement and choices is based on what is the most appropriate educational choice based on student needs.

Special Education

Gwinnett County Public Schools' Department of Special Education and Psychological Services works to provide every student with a free appropriate public education that meets each student's unique educational needs in the least restrictive and most inclusive environment possible. The vision and mission of our district's special education and psychological services department includes having student placed in the most rigorous academic setting possible based upon services as outlined in his Individual Education Plan (IEP). Students within the special education program are allowed all of the accommodations and support that the student's disability requires.

504 Plans

Students who are not served by the Special Education Department are still allowed accommodations and services through section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Revised in 2008, all schools that receive federal funds are required to provide a "free appropriate public education" to each student with a disability regardless of the nature of the disability. Section 504 is separate funding not part of the Special Education Program. These students are allowed accommodations and services in order to receive the necessary support to achieve academic success. Students that suffer a temporary medical condition that limits their ability to perform at the previous level of study will be given accommodations as needed on a temporary basis.

ESOL

Language assistance services are available for those students who speak English as a second language and whose lack of proficiency in English limits their successful participation in the regular classroom. All schools offer academic support to English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) students. Educators with specialized training provide instruction to second language learners through ESOL courses; classes are provided in a sheltered learning environment or in a regular classroom with support from the ESOL department. English language learners in need of support may receive either daily direct instruction from an ESOL teacher or instructional interventions in the regular classroom as planned by the regular classroom teacher with consultation from the ESOL teacher. As is the case with other programs, the goal of our district and school is to ensure students are placed in the most rigorous and inclusive environment as per their level of proficiency with the English language as defined by Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners (ACCESS) test scores, classroom performance, and teacher evaluations. Professional learning opportunities and ongoing trainings are available to all teachers who have the potential to work with ESOL students. ESOL students are allowed the use of accommodations based on individual needs.

Gifted Program

Students identified as accelerated learners based on assessments of mental ability, achievement, creativity and motivation levels are served by the Accelerated and Gifted Program under the guidance of a local school Gifted Coordinator. In order to qualify for gifted services, students must be referred and evaluated. Students scoring on nationally normed standardized assessments in the 90th percentile and above may be eligible for gifted services and can

be evaluated. Students can only be evaluated once in middle school and once in high school to determine eligibility. Students who qualify for gifted services are given accelerated learning and differentiation to allow them to enhance instruction to meet their unique needs for educational challenge and differentiated learning. Students are identified through a combination of teacher and/or parent recommendations, as well as standardized test scores on national tests (ITBS, CoGAT).

Process for Determining Eligibility

Students who have not been previously identified as requiring additional educational services or students who are not being adequately served in their current educational plan are evaluated using a Response to Intervention (RTI) process. Through the RTI process, a team of teachers, counselors, and administrators, in conjunction with the student's parent or guardian, work to monitor and evaluate student progress to determine if additional services are required to obtain academic success.

Students who have not been previously identified as qualifying for gifted services may be referred to the Gifted contact teacher for referral and eligibility screening by the local school Gifted Referral and Gifted Eligibility Committees. Students must score in the 90th percentile or above on normed measures of motivation, creativity, and achievement and in the 96th percentile or above in normed assessments of mental ability.

Responsibilities

At Shiloh High School, the responsibilities for supporting students within the Special Education program are assigned to set staff members according to district policies and regulations.

- Within the Special Education Department, each student is assigned a case manager who assembles an IEP team that includes the following participants: at least one of the student's regular education teachers; at least one of the student's special education teachers; one or both of the student's parents/guardians; an individual who is knowledgeable about the availability of resources in the school district and can commit resources; and, at the discretion of Gwinnett County Public Schools or the parents, other persons who have knowledge/special expertise regarding the student, including related services personnel. This team will develop an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) for the students, providing for specific accommodations, related services and supports for the student with a disability. The IEP is reviewed annually and revised as needed with an IEP team.
- For students eligible for 504 services, each school within our district maintains a 504 Coordinator. The 504 Coordinator organizes Student Support Team meetings to address the individual needs of students not experiencing success in the school setting. The 504 Coordinator will additionally ensure all student 504 plans are reviewed every three years, inform teachers and staff of the students with a 504 plan, and maintain a list of all students for each school year with 504 accommodations. For students undergoing temporary medical conditions, a support team will be put in to place consisting of a counselor, administrator, teachers, parents, and student. This support team will work with the information provided by medical professionals to develop a plan that allows for temporary accommodations for the student during the period under consideration. Should this condition become on-going, the team will work with parents to refer the student for additional services.
- Students served within the ESOL department are monitored by the ESOL teacher who ensures that the students are receiving the appropriate amount of support in school to continue to develop proficiency with English in an academic setting. The ESOL teacher is also responsible of administering annual assessments (ACCESS test) to ESOL students each year to monitor each student's growth in the acquisition and fluency within the English language, as well as ensuring the most appropriate placement in courses to allow for success in the most rigorous environment possible for each student. The annual assessment tests (ACCESS test) measures the student's abilities in the following categories: speaking, listening, reading, and writing.
- Students served within the Gifted Program are monitored for grade performance. If grades fall below a 74% in any gifted level class, students are placed on a plan of improvement and potentially removed from Gifted identified classes.

- Within the scope of the IB Diploma Programme, the IB Diploma Coordinator works with the personnel designated to support each student receiving special services. The special education department chair and case manager will inform IB teachers of the special accommodations each student receives. The IB Diploma Coordinator will complete a request of inclusive access arrangements with the appropriate department at the IB for each student requiring special accommodations in an IB Diploma class.

Differentiation and Accommodations

As each student's educational needs are different, we use a differentiated approach to allow for each student to receive the best academic setting possible based on their individual needs. Our school works to provide all teachers with ongoing professional development, including differentiated instruction strategies, and continues to receive support to produce classroom environments that ensure academic success through a variety of instructional methods.

Accommodations provided for each student depend on the nature of their educational needs as defined under state, local, and national guidelines. Students receiving Gifted Services typically do not receive accommodations, unless they qualify for another program. Gifted Students will receive accelerated learning designed to cater to the unique needs of a gifted learner. Below is a sample of some accommodations that have been previously allowed for students, but it is not an exhaustive list. As a school we are open to using accommodations as needed to provide an appropriate and challenging education for all students as determined by their educational needs as defined by supported educational documentation.

Examples of accommodations provided for students within the Special Education, ESOL, and 504 programs:

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| • Extended Time | • Translation Dictionaries or Electronic Translators |
| • Preferential Setting | • Oral Reading of Tests |
| • Rest Breaks | • Adapted Furniture |
| • Extended Testing Sessions | • Use of Highlighters |
| • Adapted Writing Tools | • Color Overlays or Templates |
| • Adapted Calculators | • Large Print |
| • Verbal Response in English Only | • Use of Service Animals |
| • Technology Applications | • Visual Aids and Pictorial Representations |
| • Audio Amplification | • Graphic Organizers |
| • Low Vision Aids | • Small Groups |
| • Oral Reading of tests and passages | |

Transition of Materials

Students who move within Gwinnett County Public Schools will have all records of Special Education, ESOL, 504, and Gifted services transferred through our student information system. Additionally, required supporting documentation may be transferred with permanent records that are transferred by our local school system over the summer.

Process for Review of Policy

A committee will be formed consisting of IB teachers, special education teachers, and administrators to evaluate the Special Education and Inclusion Policy annually. During this annual evaluation, the policy will be reviewed for needed updates and revisions, assessed for effectiveness of implementation, and to ensure the policy is communicated at Shiloh High School.

References

- Gwinnett County Schools, Department of Special Education and Psychological Services
- Gwinnett County Schools, Department of Accelerated Programs and Gifted Education
- Gwinnett County Schools, English Language Learners (ELL) Program
- Special educational needs within the International Baccalaureate programmes (2010)

- Diploma Programme: Candidates with special assessment needs (2009)
- Teaching students with particular special educational and learning needs (2004)
- International Baccalaureate From Principles to Practice; Special Education Policy Guidelines