

# Dundee Elementary Academy

## Inclusion Policy



### ***Purpose***

Dundee Elementary Academy is an International Baccalaureate World School serving students from Pre-K to 5<sup>th</sup> Grade. We believe in a child-centered education that focuses on giving each student equal opportunity for success, in all aspects of their learning. In conjunction with our language, assessment, and academic integrity policies, we provide approaches to learning and support systems that address individual needs and utilize a variety of learning practices through differentiation, extensions, scaffolding and accommodations.

### ***Mission Statement***

Through shared values, Dundee Elementary Academy provides a transdisciplinary inquiry-based education that builds the foundations for further learning and for contributing to our increasingly global society.

### ***Vision Statement***

We are agents of change in our community and nation to become a world class school.

### ***Practices and Procedures***

Students at Dundee Elementary Academy are from different backgrounds and cultures and have varying interests. Practices and procedures have been developed to remove barriers which enable every student to develop, pursue and achieve challenging personal learning goals. Teachers utilize a variety of student-specific resources and learning tools, such as technology and flexible seating, to provide an equitable learning experience. We create optimal learning environments that embraces diversity and incorporate real-world approaches that allow opportunities to embrace our diverse population. Teachers develop relationships with students, scaffold instruction and utilize peer feedback along with self-reflection as a basis for personalized learning goals.

### ***Removing Barriers and Ensuring Success***

### ***Differentiation***

Differentiated instruction is the practice of providing for the diverse needs of a classroom by modifying and adapting curriculum, instruction, inquiry, materials, student projects, and assessments to meet the learning needs of all students. All learners receive instruction that enables them to succeed within their approaches to learning, abilities, and interests. Teachers use student data, pre-assessments, formative assessments, and a gradual release approach during instruction to determine each student's strengths and weaknesses. Teams reflect on plans regularly and modify them as needed to support student learning. Students are offered differentiated instruction using, but not limited to, tiered lessons, leveled readers and enrichment activities throughout the day. We work collaboratively to provide materials, resources, and support for each student's unit of inquiry.

### **Section 504**

Section 504 is a law designed to protect the civil rights of people with disabilities. This law protects individuals with disabilities discrimination and ensures their access to an education.

A Section 504 Team will meet and decide if your child is eligible for a Section 504 plan. The team includes parents, the general education teacher and the guidance counselor or 504 designee. If a student is eligible for discrimination protections, the team will then decide if the child also needs support and accommodations. **Not all students who are eligible under Section 504 need a support plan.**

Our guidance counselor and Local Education Agency (LEA) representative oversees 504 plans and guides teachers with the implementation process and providing accommodations. Teachers are provided copies of the 504 plans at the beginning of each school year and meet with the LEA and guidance counselor throughout the year to monitor the plans. Our guidance counselor, LEA and Assistant Principal works closely to ensure that students' accommodations are met during the school year. Parent meetings, which can be requested at any time, may be held to discuss and revise plans as necessary. We utilize these plans to follow our mission and vision, so that all students have equal access to success.

### **English Language Learners (ELL)**

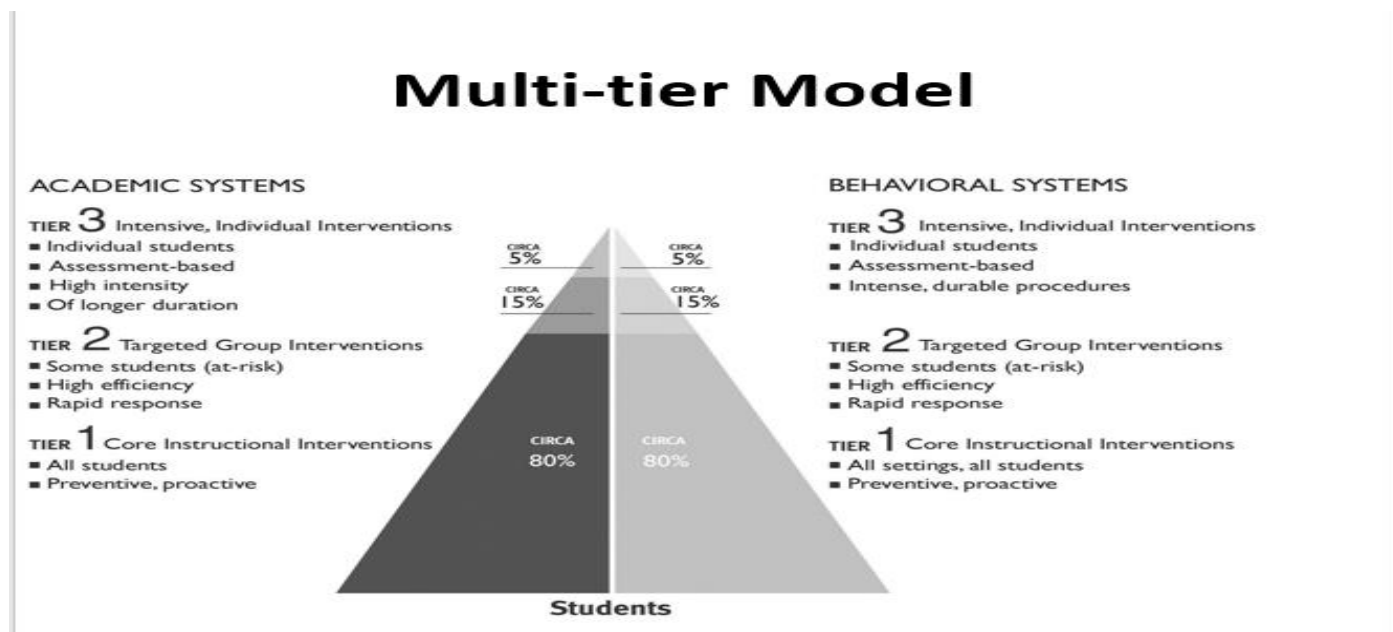
ELL Students at Dundee Elementary Academy receive daily English language instruction from their general education teacher. Teachers infuse ELL strategies in classroom instruction. Our guidance counselor and assistant principal are the active liaison, assisting in communication between the school, teacher, students, and parents. The assistant principal and guidance counselor collaborate in gathering student materials for screening and assessment and in progress monitoring to determine further academic placement or additional accommodations. The English Language Learners (ELL) in the program must be tested yearly until the student tests out of the program. Dundee

Elementary Academy's ultimate goal is to meet the academic, social, and cultural needs of all students, including our ELL students.

### **Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)**

To remove barriers, Dundee Elementary Academy follows Florida's designated system which ensures success for all students. This system is known as the Multi-Tiered System of Support, or MTSS.

According to the Florida Department of Education technical assistance paper: General Education Intervention Procedures, "MTSS is an evidence-based framework to ensure successful educational outcomes for all students by using a data-based, problem-solving process to provide and evaluate the effectiveness of multiple tiers of integrated academic, behavioral and social-emotional instruction and intervention supports matched to student need in alignment with educational standards. Although often used interchangeably, in Florida, MTSS replaces "the response to intervention (RtI) framework" for data-based problem solving. Within an MTSS, student data is used to monitor the effectiveness of interventions."



To implement the MTSS model at Dundee Elementary Academy, our school-based Student Success Team (SST) which consists of our guidance counselor, school LEA, Exceptional Student Education (ESE) teacher, school psychologist, instructional coaches as well, administration and teachers, meet each month, at a minimum. At this meeting we work to analyze data to identify students in need of intervention, develop intervention plans, assess the effectiveness of those plans, and make adjustments

accordingly. We follow the steps described below to problem solve and meet every student's needs.

## **Florida Department of Education Technical Assistance Paper- General Education Intervention Procedures**

Data-based problem solving is an ongoing, systematic process of analyzing and evaluating information to guide educational decisions and actions. The problem-solving approach contributes to effective student outcomes by accurately identifying the problem, analyzing relevant data to understand why the problem is occurring, designing, and implementing interventions, and measuring the effectiveness of the interventions that are implemented. School-based teams engage in problem solving to inform instructional decisions and develop intervention supports. Data-based problem solving involves the following steps:

- Define the problem and establish a goal by determining the discrepancy between what is expected and what is occurring. Ask, "What's the problem?"
- Analyze the problem to determine why the discrepancy is occurring.
  - Ask, "Why is there a discrepancy between the current level of performance and the desired level of performance?"
- Develop an intervention plan to achieve the goal, describe how student progress will be monitored and identify how integrity of implementation will be ensured. Ask, "What are we going to do about it?"
- Monitor student response to the intervention to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention. Ask, "Is it working?" If not, how will the intervention plan be adjusted to better support the student's progress?

Teachers deliver and document targeted intervention to students at the tier 2 and tier 3 level. They provide progress monitoring to track the student's success. Each month, teachers meet with the parents of students in these groups and update them on the student's progress. As a team, parents, teachers, and the school-based team of coaches, administration and support staff work to problem solve specific interventions for groups of students or individuals.

- **Tier 2 Academic Intervention**

Our school-based team collaborates to identify criteria and procedures for identifying students for Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions and supports. The targeted tier 2 intervention group consists of about 15% of the student population of each class. These students earn a percentile rank of 25 to 39 on district progress monitoring assessments. Students are entered into tier 2 first. If more intervention is required, then the student is moved into tier 3.

- **Tier 3 Academic Intervention**

Students targeted for a tier 3 level of intervention receive intensive, individualized intervention. These students are identified from earning a percentile rank of 24 or below on district progress monitoring assessments but must first be in tier 2 and show a need for more support.

- **Tier 2 Behavior Intervention**

When a student has earned a suspension for behavior, that student is referred to the team for Tier 2 intervention and support. The team will decide if the student should enter into tier 2 if the behavior is impacting the student's learning. The grade level team gathers supporting data of students not responding to Tier 1 practices, to develop a focused small group-oriented response to situations where problem behavior is likely. The goal of the small group intervention is to reduce the amount and/or intensity of problem behaviors.

A parent meeting is set up to finalize the behavior plan. Tier 2 students' progress is analyzed at monthly grade level MTSS meetings. Progress updates are discussed using each student's progress monitoring graph since the onset of the Tier 2 behavior plan. Modifications are suggested as needed, such as moving a student to Tier 3 for behavior intervention.

- **Tier 3 Behavior Intervention**

A student not demonstrating an increase in positive behavior after receiving Tier 2 behavior supports is referred to Dundee Elementary Academy's school-based PBIS Leadership Team for Tier 3 behavior support.

The team gathers supporting documentation to develop an individualized plan to meet the student's specific needs. Intensive intervention is provided at this point to increase desired outcomes and reduce or eliminate undesired outcomes. This is done through student/staff check ins and outs daily.

## ***Exceptional Student Education (ESE)***

Exceptional Student Education services enhance the instructional program of our school by helping students who are encountering roadblocks to successful learning. These students obtain an Individual Education Plan (IEP) which is a legal document, individualized for each student, mandated by the state and federal laws, and representing various exceptionalities. We implement an inclusive program in which all students are enrolled in their general education classes, being fully included in all aspects of the curriculum. Students are serviced and monitored by the ESE teacher to ensure their IEP's are followed and accommodations are being implemented in the classroom and standardized tests in order to give the students every opportunity to be successful.

Dundee Elementary Academy also uses BPIE. BPIE stands for Best Practices for Inclusive Education. It is a Florida Inclusion Network (FIN) facilitated self-assessment tool and process designed to facilitate the analysis, implementation, and improvement of inclusive educational practices at the district and school levels. The BPIE assessment includes indicators developed from evidence-based practices, literature, and research related to inclusive education. Each indicator is rated by a district or school team and priority needs are identified for ongoing district or school improvement activities. Each indicator rating is based on data that establish the extent to which the practice is being implemented.

**ESE District Support:**

“Polk County’s Exceptional Student Education Department serves more than 18,000 students from preschool through 22 years of age. They include students with various disabilities as well as gifted learners.

Staff members work with students’ families and teachers to identify available services and programs to help these students succeed in school and in their lives beyond the classroom. Some examples of support services include occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech therapy, mental health counseling, assistive technology and audiological evaluations.”

(Taken from the Polk County Public Schools Website: <https://polkschoolsfl.com/ese/>)

“The ESE Advisory Council explores ways to improve services for students with various disabilities as well as gifted learners. This group includes district staff, representatives from various support agencies, and the families of children who participate in Exceptional Student Education programs. Meetings are open to the public, and all are welcome to attend. For more information or to get involved in the ESE Advisory Council, call (863)535-6485.”

(Taken from the Polk County Schools Website: <https://polkschoolsfl.com/ese/>)

**Gifted Education**

The Gifted Education Program in Polk County Public Schools is a state-mandated program for grades K-12. The school program options extend and enhance the regular education curriculum. There are state guidelines that describe how a student qualifies for the gifted program.

Dundee Elementary Academy is committed to the intellectual and emotional development of our gifted learners. Academic acceleration, enrichment and gifted consultation is provided by gifted endorsed teachers. Gifted students obtain an Education Plan (EP), which is a legal document, individualized for each student.

The gifted class is designed to meet the special needs of the gifted student and is not “in addition to” the regular education program. Regular education teachers and teachers of the gifted, plan and coordinate to meet the learner’s needs as indicated in the student’s educational plan. Parents are encouraged to contact either the classroom teacher or the teacher of gifted if they perceive a problem with student progress or expectations.

Dundee Elementary Academy offers accelerated academic based opportunities who meet most of the gifted requirements to enter the program but fall just short of qualifying.

This group of “Able Learners” are given the support they need to continue to be successful academically.

“As of 2020, Polk County Public Schools has more than 5,800 students identified as “gifted learners.”

These students possess above average intellectual development and can demonstrate high performance in the areas of leadership, creativity, motivation and academic learning.

Polk County’s Gifted Education Program provides opportunities to enhance the learning experience of gifted students. The program helps these students develop their intellectual potential and address their special needs.”

“Gifted children are indeed exceptional in their thinking and learning behaviors. They are unique as a group, and even more so as individuals. Florida defines gifted students as those who have superior intellectual development and are capable of high performance in the areas of leadership, creativity, motivation, and academic learning. Presently, Polk County’s Gifted Education Program focuses on identifying and serving students who demonstrate superior intellect, show a majority of the characteristics of being gifted and present a need for the program.” (Taken from the Polk County Public Schools Website Taken from the Polk County Public Schools Website:

<https://polkschoolsfl.com/gifted/>)

### ***Student Success Team***

The whole school community approach is vital to the implementation of this policy which consists of school-based and district-based staff. The following members are involved to meet the needs of all students:

- Administration (Principal, Assistant Principal, and IB Coordinator)
- Exceptional Student Education Teacher
- Staffing Specialist (District)
- School Psychologist
- Local Education Agency (LEA) Representative
- Occupational Therapist (District)
- Physical Therapy (District)
- Speech and Language Pathologist
- Instructional Coaches
- General Education Teachers
- Parent and Guardians

## ***Polk County School Board's Equity Statement***

“The School Board of Polk County, Florida, shall maintain a learning environment free from discrimination and harassment based on race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation, transgender status or gender identity), religion or disability (including HIV, AIDS or sickle cell trait), pregnancy, marital status, age (except as authorized by law), military status, ancestry or genetic information, which are classes protected by State and/or Federal law (collectively "protected classes"). Students shall not be excluded from participating in any educational program or activity provided in the public schools of Polk County based on race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation, transgender status or gender identity), religion or disability (including HIV, AIDS or sickle cell trait, pregnancy , marital status, age (except as authorized by law, military status, ancestry or genetic information, which are classes protected by State and/or Federal law (collectively "protected classes"). If you have any questions with regard to discrimination or harassment, Title II or Title IX, you may contact Human Resource Services Office of Equity and Compliance, at (863) 534-0513. If you have any questions regarding Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, you may contact the Director of Exceptional Student Education or Assistant Superintendent, Learning Support at (863) 534-0931. Written questions may be forwarded to the Equity and Compliance Analyst at: The School Board of Polk County, Florida 1915 South Floral Avenue Post Office Box 391 Bartow, FL 33831” (Taken from Polk County Schools Code of Conduct)