



Mira Costa High School

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February 27, 2006

Dear Parent:

I write to provide you with important information regarding program options for students with special needs. Mira Costa High School has produced the attached comprehensive guide outlining its program options for students with disabilities. The guide includes program descriptions, explains support structures and describes accommodations and modifications. This information is designed to help you, your child and his or her individualized education program ("IEP") team make appropriate educational decisions.

We recommend that you carefully review this guide as it contains important information regarding how course selection may affect both graduation from high school and post graduation plans. In addition, a description of the differences between modifications and accommodations is included. For example, it explains how certain adaptations that fundamentally alter the coursework or tests may affect the type of credit that a student receives. In turn, the type of credit received may affect the student's ability to graduate or enter a four-year college.

However, it is important to remember that educational decisions regarding students with disabilities generally are made by their IEP teams in meetings where plans for their futures are discussed in detail and decisions regarding appropriate placement are made based on their unique needs. Graduation is discussed during IEP meetings and the team determines whether or not a student is diploma-bound based on the courses the IEP team determines to be appropriate.

If you have any questions regarding this placement or program options for your child, I invite you to schedule a meeting with your child's Educational Advisor, Case Carrier, or Ellyn Schneider, Director of Special Education for the Manhattan Beach Unified School District.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Julie Ruisinger'.

Julie Ruisinger
Principal
Mira Costa High

MANHATTAN BEACH UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Mira Costa High School

1. Program Options for Students Who Need Specialized Instruction.

The following program options at Mira Costa High School provide direct, explicit instruction to students in core curriculum areas. These programs are designed to meet the continuum of needs of all students and are available to students with disabilities for whom special day classes are not appropriate. All students have access to programs that allow them to earn a high school graduation diploma. Courses that students choose may be selected from different programs. These courses and programs are also described in the Course Description Handbook, which is located on the Mira Costa High School website at mchs2.manhattan.k12.ca.us. Choose "registration 2005-2006" and then click on Course Description Handbook.

General Education College Preparatory Program

Within each subject content field, core and elective courses are available that meet high school graduation requirements and the *a-g* University of California (UC) approved high school courses for college admission. These courses cover all the California State Content Standards and include advanced level honor and advanced placement courses. Due to the structured support available, many students with special needs are enrolled in college preparatory courses. The following is a list of General Education College Preparatory Program classes:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Course</u>
9	English 1-2 CP
10	English 3-4 CP
10	English 3-4 H
11	English 5-6 CP
11	English 5-6H
12	English 7-8 CP
12	English 7-8 AP
9/10	Algebra AB
9/10	Algebra CD
9/10	Algebra 1-2 CP
9-12	Geometry 1-2 CP
9/10	Earth Science 1-2 CP
9/10	Biology 1-2 CP
10	World History 1-2 CP
10	AP European History
11	U.S. History 1-2 CP
11	AP U.S. History
12	Economics CP
12	Economics H
12	Government H

General Education Non-College Preparatory Graduation Program

For students who have determined that they will not enroll in a four-year college directly from high school, several core courses are available that fulfill high school graduation requirements. These courses meet state standards, but cover only the Essential Content Standards developed under the direction of the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA); in the absence of the development of Essential Standards developed by ACSA, essential standards are developed and/or selected by the course instructor. Please see the discussion of essential standards that follows this section. The courses provide opportunity for students to work at a slower pace and receive more time for practice. The relevance of the materials covered is emphasized. These classes tend to be smaller in size than general education college preparatory programs. The following is a list of General Education Non-College Preparatory Program classes:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Course</u>
10	English 3-4
11	English 5-6
12	English 7-8
9/10	Pre-Algebra, Course 2
9-12	Applied Geometry
10	World History 1-2
11	U.S. History 1-2
12	Economics
12	Government
9/10	Biology

Essential Standards

A content standard describes what a student is expected to know and be able to do at the conclusion of the course. Taken as whole, content standards delineate a broad range of expectations for the course. Essential standards are those content standards that are critical to the understanding of the course. Essential standards have been identified at the State level in core English, math, and science courses. Essential standards in English and math focus on the elements of the curriculum that will help a student prepare for the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE). The State subject content committee for social studies has determined that addressing all standards is essential, but varying the depth of coverage is possible.

An IEP team may decide that for a particular student with special needs it is appropriate for the student to be assessed on only the essential standards of a course, although the student will continue to be exposed to work on all the standards. The essential standards option is available in the core graduation requirement subjects of English, social studies, first-year algebra, earth science, and biology.

When an IEP team decides that a student with special needs will be assessed on only the essential standards in a course, the course will still fulfill graduation requirements. The course will not, however, receive college preparatory status. Because all the standards were not both taught and assessed in the course, the student will neither be prepared, nor eligible, for a subsequent college preparatory course for which the course assessed on essential standards is a prerequisite.

General Education Teamed Courses

Mira Costa is piloting a program, which can be accessed by both general and special education students in the general education setting. At times, all students are in the general education classroom receiving instruction from the content specialist, i.e., the general education teacher. At other times, each teacher works with small groups or individuals that may or may not have special needs. Currently, Mira Costa offers one College Preparatory class that is co-taught by a general education and special education teacher. The teachers collaborate in planning and teaching so that students reap the benefits of multiple teaching strategies activities. The following course is a General Education Teamed class:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Course</u>
9/10	Earth Space Science CP

Resource Specialist Program

For the 2004-2005 school year, Mira Costa added a traditional 9th grade resource specialist program English course for students with disabilities. While the course curriculum covers the Essential Content Standards for 9th grade English, the special educator who teaches the course is also focusing on specific student needs in the areas of reading and writing as determined by his or her Individual Education Program (IEP). The following is a Resource Specialist Program class:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Course</u>
9	RSP English 1-2

The attached chart further supports and explains these program options. (See Exhibit A. Continuum of Program Offerings.) Discussed in Section 3 below are the numerous support structures available to students who need specialized instruction to succeed in the above-described courses and/or the additional program options described in Section 3.

2. Guidance for Teachers, Parents and IEP Team Members Outlining Common Disability-Related Accommodations and/or Modifications to Tests and/or Courses, and Their Effect on Graduation Requirements.

Accommodations and modifications refer to changes in several areas. These areas may include teaching strategies and methods, student assignments, curriculum, and assessment methods, time, and setting. A change may be either an accommodation or a modification.

depending upon whether or not it fundamentally alters what is being taught or assessed. Changes to tests and/or coursework that do not fundamentally alter the tests and/or course will not independently cause the denial of a high school diploma or graduation credit.

Accommodations

An accommodation does not fundamentally change what is being taught or assessed. Because of this, the student will earn graduation and/or college preparatory credit, despite the use of the accommodation. The following are examples of common accommodations¹:

- a small group setting for instruction
- a different method of instruction that does not alter the essential standard being taught
- a different setting for an assessment
- a different method of assessment that does not alter the essential standard being assessed.
- instruction with special scaffolding
- access to teacher/student notes to supplement the own student's notes
- using a computer, with assistive tools but spell check is disabled, instead of hand writing an essay
- extra time on exams where speed of work is not part of an essential standard
- being assessed on essential standards only

Modifications

A modification fundamentally changes what is being taught or assessed. For this reason, a student who receives a modification on a test or in a course will not earn graduation or college preparatory credit for that course. The following changes are examples of common modifications:

- a change in the course curriculum which omits one or more essential standards
- A change in assessment to omit one or more essential standards from the course assessment.
- omitting one or more essential standards from the course assessment
- using a calculator on an assessment that measures calculation skills
- having a comprehension reading passage read aloud by a second party

Guidelines Related to Accommodations and Modifications

¹ We note that whether a change is considered an accommodation or a modification depends upon what is being taught and/or assessed. Therefore, under certain circumstances (i.e., where the change fundamentally alters what is being taught and/or assessed), the changes listed here may be considered a modification.

In some cases, determining whether a change is an accommodation or a modification is not difficult. In other cases, the determination requires more consideration and discussion. The guidelines for California Statewide Assessments provide helpful examples. (See Exhibit B, "Matrix of Test Variations, Accommodations, and Modifications for Administration of California Statewide Assessments.")

At least one member of each IEP team will be knowledgeable regarding whether a proposed change constitutes an accommodation or a modification. In the event that the IEP team is not certain whether a proposed change is an accommodation or a modification, a member of the IEP teams will contact the District's Director of Special Education to resolve the issue.

Instruction and assessment on essential standards only is not a modification. If it is determined that, with coursework or test accommodations as indicated in the IEP, a student cannot satisfy course or test requirements on essential standards, and therefore modifications are necessary, the IEP team will clearly inform the parents that the student will be ineligible for graduation credit for that course or test and this determination will be clearly documented in the student's IEP. In these situations, parents will be given the option to reconvene an IEP team meeting to review potential alternatives to the proposed modifications. It is the IEP team's responsibility to decide when a student is not diploma-bound because the curriculum and assessment will be modified. The IEP team will consider all appropriate accommodations and/or modifications necessary to assist students master course content and help ensure that their knowledge and skills are appropriately assessed.

3. Range of Program Options for Students with Disabilities.

Program Options

Mira Costa High School makes a wide range of program options available to students with disabilities. In addition to the options discussed in section I, the following options are available to students with disabilities. Specific course descriptions are provided in the Course Description Handbook, located on the Mira Costa High School website.

Special Education Diploma Program

Special education teachers teach Special Day Classes in specific core subjects. These courses are aligned to the District general education courses, focus on essential standards, and use instructional strategies that are adapted to meet the needs of students with IEPs. These courses meet high school graduation requirements but are not designed for a student to go directly to a four-year college. Class size varies from year-to-year, but the general average is eight students. Each class has a special education teacher and an instructional aide.

Special Education Certificate of Completion Program (non-diploma bound)

These courses are designed for the student with special needs whose IEP states that the student is non-diploma bound. The curriculum follows a developmental continuum of fundamental skills exposing students to academic and vocational skills. Linkage to advanced training, education, and employment-training opportunities after high school are explored.

Non-Public Schools

In the event that the available in-house program options are not appropriate to meet the unique needs of particular students, the IEP teams may place those students in appropriate certified non-public schools.

Support Structures

Support structures are implemented to enable students with disabilities to participate in the District's programs. IEP teams discuss the appropriate least restrictive environment for placement in individual courses, being mindful of the student's strengths and needs. Regular contact between case carrier and parents is key to student success.

Resource Specialist Support

Mira Costa High School has designed and implemented a Learning Center model that supports the ideal that all students can succeed in the least restrictive environment of the general education environment given appropriate support and guidance. Students access this support in several ways. The Learning Center resource specialist teacher provides collaborative support to the general education teacher in the area of specialized teaching and learning strategies. These strategies enable general education teachers to help students with special needs access the curriculum. Resource support also includes instructional assistants who are trained by the resource teachers, and who work in both the Learning Center and the general education classrooms.

All ninth grader students in the resource program have an elective period in the Learning Center. Most of these students continue in this elective through their senior year based on the decision of the IEP team. Typically, time in the Learning Center for a student consists of work on learning strategies and organizational skills, one-on-one direct instruction in core content areas, access to computer technology, small group tutorials, assistance with homework, study sessions, and quiet study areas. The Learning Center provides students with access to class notes, extra time on tests, and support with homework assignments.

Inclusion Specialist Support

A special education teacher serves as an inclusion specialist on campus to support identified students in meeting their IEP goals and the subject content standards of general education classes. As needed, the inclusion specialist teaches individual and small groups for several periods during the day. For the balance of the day, this specialist supports teachers in identifying appropriate methods of instruction based on student needs, closely

monitors student progress, and trains the instructional assistants who work in the general education classrooms.

Reading Remediation

The acquisition of reading skills is a component of the support structure for many students in high school. A special education teacher provides instruction in decoding, fluency, and comprehension. Currently, the primary reading programs used for instruction are *Wilson Reading System*, *SRA Corrective Reading and Corrective Spelling*, *Read Naturally*, and *Language!* Elective credit is available for successful completion of a semester course.

After-School Remediation

Resource teachers are available in the Learning Center after school two days per week to work one-to-one with students. This tutoring may take the form of direct instruction in writing skills, reinforcement of concepts presented in general education content courses, and organization and completion of homework assignments.

Tutoring is also available in the general education setting. Peer tutoring and tutoring labs provided by teachers occurs four days per week after school in the library.

County Partnerships

The Mira Costa campus is the location for two county support programs. The first is the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program, and the second is the Special Day Class/Emotionally Disturbed Program.

El Camino Transition

Some students complete their high school diploma through the District transition program. This program is an option for students who need a fifth year to complete several courses required for graduation. An IEP meeting is held in the spring of the student's senior year to review the graduation status of the student and the family's post high school goals.

Non-Public Agencies and/or Consultants

In the event that staff and/or resources are not available and/or qualified to provide necessary and appropriate services to students with disabilities, the IEP teams may recommend that such services be provided through certified non-public agencies and/or consultants.

Continuum of Program Offerings

Grade	Subject	Notes	Special Day Classes		Basic	C.P.	C.P.-Team-Taught	Honors/AP
			Special Day Classes Skills	Diploma				
9	English	4 years required		English 1-2*	RSP English 1-2 English 3-4	English 1-2 CP# English 3-4 CP		
10				English 3-4*	English 5-6	English 5-6 CP		English 5-4 H
11				English 5-6*	English 7-8	English 7-8 CP		English 5-6 H
12				English 7-8*				English 7-8 AP
9-12			Life Skills Reading					
9-10	Math	2 years required including Algebra 1-2 or Algebra AB,CD		Math 1-4	Pre-Algebra 1-2#			
9-10					Algebra AB*#	Algebra AB#		
9-10					Algebra CD**	Algebra CD#		
9-10						Algebra 1-2 CP#		
9-12			Life Skills Math		Applied Geometry	Geometry 1-2 CP		
9-10	Science	2 years required		Earth Science 1-2*		Earth Science 1-2 CP	Earth-Space Science	
9-10				Biology 1-2*		Biology 1-2 CP		
9-12			Practical Science					
10	World History	1 year required		World History	World History 1-2	World History 1-2 CP		AP European History
11	U.S. History	1 year required		U.S. History	U.S. History 1-2	U.S. History 1-2 CP		AP U.S. History
12	Economics	1 semester required		Economics	Economics	Economics CP		Economics H
12	Government	1 semester required		Government	Government	Government CP		Government H
9-10	Physical Education	2 years required including 1 year grade 9		Adaptive P.E.	P.E./Athletics	P.E./Athletics		P.E./Athletics
9-12	Health/Adult Living	1 semester required	Health/Adult Living	Health	Health/Adult Living	Health/Adult Living		
9-12	Arts	1 year required		Sped Elective Social Communication Investigation of Personal Growth and Development	Arts Elective Program	Arts Elective Program		AP Art History AP Studio Art AP Appreciating the Arts

Matrix of Test Variations, Accommodations, and Modifications
for Administration of California Statewide Assessments

APPENDIX B

	STAR					Physical Fitness
	CAT/6	CST	Appendix 3	CAHSEE	CELDT	
Test Variation (1)						
Accommodation (2)						
Modification (3)						
Test administration directions that are simplified or clarified (does not apply to test questions)	ALL	ALL	ALL	ALL	ALL	ALL
Test individual student separately, provided that a test examiner directly supervises the student	1	1	1	1	1	1
Visual magnifying equipment	1	1	1	1	1	Not applicable
Audio amplification equipment	1	1	1	1	1	1

Note: Refer to the California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Education for each specific assessment program for more detail.

ALL = These test variations may be provided to all students.

Test Variation (1) = Eligible students may have testing variations if regularly used in the classroom.

Accommodation (2) = Eligible students shall be permitted to take the examination/test with accommodations if specified in the eligible student's IEP or Section 504 Plan for use on the examination, standardized testing, or for use during classroom instruction and assessment.

Modification (3) = For the STAR Program and CELDT, eligible students shall be permitted to take the tests with modifications if specified in the eligible student's IEP or Section 504 Plan.

Eligible students shall be permitted to take the CAHSEE with modifications if specified in the eligible student's IEP or Section 504 Plan for use on the examination, standardized testing, or for use during classroom instruction and assessment.

**Matrix of Test Variations, Accommodations, and Modifications
for Administration of California Statewide Assessments**

	STAR					Physical Fitness
	CAT/6	CST	Appendix 3	CAHSEE	CELDT	
Test Variation (1) Accommodation (2) Modification (3)						
Noise buffers (e.g. individual carrel or study enclosure)	1	1	1	1	1	Not applicable
Special lighting or acoustics; special or adaptive furniture	1	1	1	1	1	Not applicable
Colored overlay, mask, or other means to maintain visual attention	1	1	1	1	1	Not applicable
Manually Coded English or American Sign Language to present directions for administration (does not apply to test questions)	1	1	1	1	1	1
Student marks in test booklet (other than responses)	All For grade 3 – marks must be erased to avoid scanning interference	All For grades 2, 3 – marks must be erased to avoid scanning interference	2 Grades 4-11 For grades 2, 3 – marks must be erased to avoid scanning interference	All	All Grades 3-12 K-Grade 2: Red ball point pen only, test booklets may not be used again	Not applicable
Student marks responses in test booklet and responses are transferred to a scorable answer document by an employee of the school, district, or nonpublic school	2	2	2	2	2	Not applicable

**Matrix of Test Variations, Accommodations, and Modifications
for Administration of California Statewide Assessments**

	STAR					Physical Fitness
	CAT/6	CST	Appendix 3	CAHSEE	CELDT	
Test Variation (1) Accommodation (2) Modification (3)						
Responses dictated [orally, or in Manually coded English or American Sign Language] to a scribe for selected-response items (multiple-choice questions)	2	2	2	2	2	Not applicable
Word processing software with spell and grammar check tools turned off for the essay responses (writing portion of the test)	Not applicable	2	Not applicable	2	2	Not applicable
Essay responses dictated orally or in Manually Coded English to a scribe, audio recorder, or speech-to-text converter and the student provides all spelling and language conventions.	Not applicable	2	Not applicable	2	2	Not applicable
Assistive device that does not interfere with the independent work of the student on the multiple-choice and/or essay responses (writing portion of the test)	2	2	2	2	2	Not applicable
Braille transcriptions provided by the test contractor	2	2	2	2	2	Not applicable
Large print versions						
Test items enlarged if font larger than required on large print versions	2	2	2	2	2	Not applicable
Extra time on a test within a testing day	2	ALL	2	ALL	ALL	ALL

**Matrix of Test Variations, Accommodations, and Modifications
for Administration of California Statewide Assessments**

	STAR					Physical Fitness
	CAT/6	CST	Appendix 3	CAHSEE	CELDT	
Test Variation (1) Accommodation (2) Modification (3)						
Test over more than one day for a test or test part to be administered in a single sitting	2	2	2	2	2	Not applicable
Supervised breaks within a section of the test	2	2	2	2	2	Not applicable
Administration of the test at the most beneficial time of day to the student	2	2	2	2	2	2
Test administered at home or in hospital by a test examiner	2	2	2	2	2	2
Dictionary	3	3	3	3	3	Not applicable
Manually Coded English or American Sign Language to present test questions	2 Math, Science	2 Math, Science, History-social Science	2 Math	2 Math	2 Writing	Not applicable
	3 Reading, Language, Spelling	3 ELA	3 Reading, Language, Spelling	3 ELA	3 Reading, Listening, Speaking	Not applicable
Test questions read aloud to student or audio presentation (CD)	2 Math, Science	2 Math, Science, History-social Science	2 Math	2 Math	2 Writing	Not applicable

**Matrix of Test Variations, Accommodations, and Modifications
for Administration of California Statewide Assessments**

Test Variation (1) Accommodation (2) Modification (3)	STAR					Physical Fitness
	CAT/6	CST	Appendix 3	CAHSEE	CELDT	
	3 Reading, Language, Spelling	3 ELA	3 Reading, Language, Spelling	3 ELA	3 Reading	Not applicable
Calculators on the mathematics or science tests	3	3	3	3	Not applicable	Not applicable
Arithmetic table on the mathematics or science tests	3	3	3	3	Not applicable	Not applicable
Math manipulatives on the mathematics or science tests	3	3	3	3	Not applicable	Not applicable
Word processing software with spell and grammar check tools enabled on the essay responses writing portion of test	Not applicable	3	Not applicable	3	3	Not applicable
Essay responses dictated orally, in Manually Coded English, or in American Sign Language to a scribe, [audio recorder, or speech-to-text converter] (scribe provides spelling, grammar, and language conventions).	Not applicable	3	Not applicable	3	3	Not applicable
Assistive device that interferes with the independent work of the student on the multiple-choice and/or essay responses	3	3	3	3	3	Not applicable
Unlisted Accommodation or Modification	Check with CDE	Check with CDE	Check with CDE	Check with CDE	Check with CDE	Check with CDE

Matrix of Test Variations for Administration of California Statewide Assessments for English Learners*
August 2004

Test Variation	STAR			Physical Fitness
	CAT/6	CST	CAHSEE	
Hear the test directions printed in the test administration manual translated into the student's primary language. Ask clarifying questions about the test directions in the student's primary language.	Variation Allowed	Variation Allowed	Variation Allowed	Variation Allowed
Additional supervised breaks within a testing day or following each section (STAR) within a test part provided that the test section is completed within a testing day. A test section is identified by a "STOP" at the end of it.	Variation Allowed	Variation Allowed	Variation Allowed	Not applicable
ELs may have the opportunity to be tested separately with other ELs provided that the student is directly supervised by an employee of the school who has signed the test security affidavit and the student has been provided such a flexible setting as part of his/her regular instruction or assessment.	Variation Allowed	Variation Allowed	Variation Allowed	Variation Allowed
Access to translation glossaries/word lists (English-to-primary language). Glossaries/word lists shall not include definitions or formulas.	Not allowed	Variation Allowed Math, science, history-social science	Variation Allowed	Not applicable
		Not allowed ELA		

Note: Refer to the California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Education for each specific program for more detail.

*Because the CELDT and Aprenda 3 are tests specifically for English learners, there are no separate guidelines for administering the CELDT or Aprenda 3 to this population. Please refer to the Matrix of Test Variations, Accommodations, and Modifications for Administration of California Statewide Assessments for additional variations for all students, including English learners.