

## **CRIA Learning Support Policy**

### **Program Overview for Primary, Middle and High School**

The Learning Support (LS) teacher works in collaboration with the Guidance Counselor and the English Language Learners (ELL) teacher to support students in the areas of academics, behavior and social and emotional development. LS services range from observations and consultation with staff and parents to a range of group and limited individualized instruction for students with various mild learning needs.

Our Learning Support Delivery model is based on a two-tiered system. Students are placed on one of the two levels of support ranging from *Monitor* (no direct services), to *LS-1* (time-limited intervention services).

#### **Monitor**

Students on Monitor status do not receive learning support but are reviewed periodically by the Learning Support teacher. The student does not currently meet the criteria for LS1 support but there is data that suggests they may have an educational need that is not clearly evident at this time. In addition, the student is a concern to their parent(s) and/or teacher(s). Should educators who know the student well suspect that a learning difficulty may present as the student moves through the grade levels may refer students on Monitor status for an educational assessment (not conducted by CRIA staff). The results of the assessment may qualify a student for LS1 services as the presenting issues become clearer.

#### **Learning Support Level-1 (LS1)**

This level of support is offered to a student who is working on the same instructional objectives and the same curriculum content as his/her grade level peers but requires adaptations to the way the material is presented and/or to the way in which they demonstrate what they have learned. Adaptations may include accommodations such as:

- change in amount and pace of the curriculum
- methods of presentation
- time-limited intervention
- differentiated assessments

The student typically works in the regular classroom with their peers but may require time-limited support in specific areas by a learning support teacher and/or the student's teacher(s) may require consultation with a learning support professional in order to adapt the curriculum and/or instructional practices to the needs of the student. The student with Level-1 learning support is assigned to the Learning Support teacher who acts as the case manager. Students will receive support as outlined in a Learning Support Plan 1 (LSP1) developed and implemented by the learning support teacher in consultation with the concerned teacher(s), parent(s) and any specialists, as required. The LSP is the CRIA

equivalent of an Individual Educational Plan (IEP). At times, based on student needs, LS teacher may work on a consultation basis with the teacher(s) and parents, without the goals being outlined in an LSP.

## **Limitations**

CRIA is unable to accommodate students who require significant modifications to the content of the curriculum and/or instructional practices under the direction of a special education teacher, or who may require a specialized program due to the following circumstances/special needs:

- needs individual attention and extensive support for academic, behavioral, or physical challenges
- requires direct instruction and/or specialized instruction
- is not always able to follow regular/typical curriculum
- needs modifications of learning standards and/or materials
- needs direct individualized or small group instruction outside of the mainstream classroom parameters
- needs instruction in areas not typically covered in the regular program (i.e. social skills training, interpersonal skills, life skills, behavior modification therapies, specialized gifted & talented)
- may require the services of specialists outside of school (OT, PT, etc.)
- may require specialized materials, program and/or equipment

Under certain circumstances a student already enrolled in the school may be counselled to seek an alternative school, particularly where CRIA may be unable to continue to provide an appropriate program; where the school is unable to provide additional program requirements; or where disruption occurs to the normal learning of other children. A decision not to re-enroll such a student would be based upon professional psychological assessment (if appropriate), the classroom teacher's advice, parental consultation, the carefully considered recommendation of the Learning Support teacher, and with the final approval of the Director.

## **Additional Services and External Assessments**

Educational evaluations are not available at CRIA. Where necessary, parents may be requested to obtain external educational assessments in order to identify, understand, and serve student needs more effectively.

External assessment refers to assessments conducted by personnel external to the school. Such assessment will be recommended by the LS teacher and/or School Principal/Director and the costs will be borne by the parents. Recommendation for assessment by a specialist external to the school shall only be made once the school has completed a within school assessment of the student's needs and the LS teacher determines that further assessment is necessary. Note that educational assessments are not conducted at CRIA by CRIA faculty.

LS teacher recommendations for external assessment might include one or more of the following types of assessment:

**1. *Psycho-Educational Assessment:*** is conducted by an educational/school/clinical psychologist and involves the administration of norm-referenced tests of ability and achievement.

**2. *Speech and Language:*** is conducted by a Speech and Language Pathologist (SLP) and involves the assessment of communication including language, articulation, pragmatics, fluency and voice.

**3. *Occupational Therapy:*** is conducted by an Occupational Therapist (OT) and involves the assessment of fine and gross motor skills used in self-care and in school work and leisure activities.

**4. *Psychiatric Assessment:*** is conducted by a psychiatrist, one who is preferably trained to work with children and adolescents and involves the assessment of emotional and mental health.

Parents are responsible for following through on the recommendation for assessment, both internal and external and providing the school with the relevant reports and recommendations from the specialist/s. Continued enrollment at CRIA is dependent on parent's agreement and fulfillment of these recommendations by the school.

### **Admissions Procedure**

The goal of the school and the LS department is to support student needs. With this in mind, students flagged at admissions are informally or formally assessed to ensure the school can meet their needs. Parent interviews, trial days and diagnostic screenings and assessments are some of the other ways in helping us determine the level of support required and the possibility of meeting those needs. Parents may be requested to provide further diagnostic information to help clarify presenting needs. Parents are required to provide all information, records and reports pertaining to previously diagnosed special learning needs at the time of application to CRIA, or if the child is currently an enrolled student at CRIA, at the time that the reports are made available to parents. Should a parent choose not to disclose assessments or withholds knowledge of special learning needs as required on the Special Learning Needs form (required for the enrollment process), a student's enrollment at CRIA can be terminated.

### **Accommodations and Modifications Procedures**

Primary, middle and high school students on Learning Support Level 1 are eligible for receiving accommodations at various stages of their learning in order to access the curriculum and addressing academic needs as per the LSP.

### ***What are accommodations?***

Accommodations are changes to the **way** a student is expected to learn or how he/she is assessed. Goals for learning are not altered when accommodations are put in place. LS1 students are eligible to receive accommodations in their learning, assignments and assessments. Accommodations reflect, "*leveling of the playing field*" to ensure that students with learning needs can achieve the same goals as their peers with effective support along the way.

### **Procedure for Accommodations for Primary, Middle and High School Students**

Once a student is placed on Learning Support, the LS teacher, in consultation with the concerned teacher(s) and parents, designs a Learning Support Plan (LSP). The accommodations required to support student learning are written into the LSP and agreed upon by all. A copy of the LSP is made available to the concerned teacher(s) and parents. One copy is also placed in the student's file. Regular follow up between the LS teacher and the child's classroom teachers ensure the effectiveness of the strategies and the impact on student learning and progress. The student's progress is reviewed bi-annually as part of the learning support cycle. The LSP goals will be updated by the end of each academic year.

### ***Should accommodations have an impact on how assignments are graded?***

School assignments and tests completed with accommodations should be graded in the same way as those completed without accommodations. Accommodations are meant to provide equal and ready access to the task at hand and are not meant to provide an undue advantage to the user.

### **Some Examples of Accommodations**

1. Instructional methods and materials – copies of lesson notes, use visual aids along with verbal instructions, provide concrete materials to learn about math, use a calculator, etc. as indicated in the LSP.
2. Assignments and assessments – use a word processor, different quiet area/room to do a test, time extensions, break longer assignments into parts, etc.
3. Learning environment – area away from distraction, different room to complete tests, change grouping to suit needs, etc.
4. Special communication systems – text-to-speech software to help students read, use of a laptop/typewriter, etc. (provided by the student's family).
5. Time demands and scheduling – time extensions, organizers to help keep up with deadlines and assignments, etc.
6. Extended time on assignments.
7. Extended time on exams (a max. of 50% more time, decided on an individual basis)

### **What are modifications?**

Modifications are changes to **what** a student is expected to learn. These are primarily adaptations to the curriculum or course content, which may alter grade level expectation. Modifications help to reduce the overall cognitive demands of the task and enable students to produce greater quality of work within limited/altered curriculum goals. **CRIA does not offer modifications to our learning standards as a college preparatory school.**

*Modifications could reflect one or more of the following:*

- A reduction in content or concepts to be taught/learned
- Altered assignments (e.g. reduction in the concepts addressed)
- Alternate assessments in conjunction with modified rubrics
- Alternate programs (excused from one course to supplement with another)

### **Summary of Services and Availability at CRIA**

<b>Level of Support</b>	<b>Available at CRIA</b>	<b>Description of Needs</b>
Monitor	YES	No formal assessments support a need for formal services; LS teacher monitors progress with student and student's teacher(s)
Learning Support Level 1 (LS1)	YES	Student is able to work on grade-level content with limited accommodations within the classroom such as: methods of presentation; differentiated assessments; change of setting for assessments; additional time for assessments/projects, etc.; Primary students will have time-limited small-group and individual work with LS teacher. Due to increased academic requirements in Secondary, small-group and individual support will be limited.
Learning Support Level 2 (LS2)	NO	Student requires significant modifications to the content of the curriculum and/or instructional practices under the direction of a special education teacher. Modifications are required to ensure that students can access the curriculum.

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