

Here is an abbreviated outline of the fullest spectrum of support program elements that a school may wish to build up over time. Expanded detail for this approach is in “Educating for Balance and Resilience”.

Goals for an Educational Support Team (EST)

1. Faculty buy-in and collaboration - teachers feel EST makes their work easier and more effective
2. Parent/community appreciation
3. All students receive key screenings and developmental activities
4. Students with needs feel seen and are helped
5. “Not too soon, not too late” intervention, i.e., giving help as soon as the need is clear (see below)*
6. Parents of students in EST support program come to realistic picture of learning situation
7. Continuity of program

All of the above require accountability protocols and implementation

Individual/small group support modalities consistent with Waldorf Education

1. Therapeutic Eurythmy
2. Extra Lesson
 - * *The above two modalities are especially important in Kindergarten through Grade 4, because they provide an avenue for help before the student becomes self-conscious about a struggle, and may in many cases decrease or avoid a need for direct tutoring later on.*
3. Remedial Reading - Orton/Gillingham based approach for students who are/may be dyslexic
4. Remedial Math - to include implementation of the approach to numeracy foundations in the “Number Sense Routines” books by Jessica Shumway
 - *For reading and math, EST needs to be prepared for early interventions*
5. In limited cases, third-party support, including public school district IEP services, tutoring, Occupational Therapy, Developmental Optometry, speech, etc.

Assessment checkpoints

1. First Grade readiness - early spring for rising kindergarten students. Might need repeat during First Grade; possible beginning of Therapeutic Eurythmy.
2. Second Grade Extra Lesson developmental assessment - mostly near each student’s 8th birthday, but earlier in year if support need seems likely.
3. Literacy and numeracy screenings at any point if early intervention may be needed.
4. Third and Fourth Grade screenings for literacy and numeracy - gr. 3 is a pre-screen and gr. 4 to be reported to parents on report card.

After the above, parents and teachers should have a clear picture of emerging needs; further support needs will become more straightforwardly surfaced by class teacher/report cards and support sessions can focus on tutored skill-building.

“Ingredients” - additional program elements that contribute to success

1. Teacher inservices for Extra Lesson activities as integral parts of Main Lesson classwork.
2. Semi-annual EST “survey” meetings with each class teacher
3. Enrichment Class model - Extra Lesson teacher works with whole class once a week to further focus on movement, drawing and painting. This benefits all children in class and provides an invaluable pre-screening for those who might need pullout services.
4. Teacher for rising Grade One sits in on and records the First Grade Readiness screenings.
5. Admissions committee consisting of class teacher, EST members and perhaps Faculty Chair. Group approach to considering healthy constellation of new class. Also can convene in cases in any grade where there’s a question of an enrolled student’s/family’s fit with the school.
6. Class teacher periodically completes developmental screening forms per “Educating for Balance & Resilience”.
7. Movement program that fully incorporates foundational movement approach.
8. Faculty Meeting study of all the above, together with individual artistic presentations by EST.

Accountability modalities

1. Detailed job descriptions with time allocations specified
2. Weekly EST meetings
3. Monthly EST report to Faculty including confidential tabulation of student services delivered and list of students on watch list
4. Paper trail of permission and goals forms per “Educating for Balance & Resilience”