

UP Approach to Special Education

Transformative teaching that leads to a love of learning and strong sense of intellectual independence

Rigor for All We believe all students can and must meet high academic expectations. We allow every student to grapple with rich, grade-level concepts, ideas and tasks and be a full member of our academic community. It is the role of teachers to ensure all students are able to master grade-level content. We do this through extraordinary core instruction, effective supports and interventions where needed.

Embrace the Struggle Struggling to make sense of ideas, rather than being given solutions, is how humans learn. The process of learning through debate and inquiry is as important as the knowledge gained. We build classroom cultures in which struggle is celebrated, not feared. We reduce and remove learning scaffolds over time, seeking creative thinking and problem solving abilities in all students.

Inclusion Whenever Possible We design and provide behavioral and instructional supports in least restrictive environments because the ultimate goal is for students to operate in inclusion with the supports they need to succeed. We adapt our inclusive spaces to fit every student because all students have a right to be educated alongside their peers in the general education environment.

Grade-Level Mastery for Every Student Every student can be taught to think critically and can learn grade-level content when held to rigorous standards. We teach the skills students need and fill learning gaps that exist. We figure out how each student learns and devise individual pathways to achieve grade-level and IEP goal mastery with urgency.

Individual Paths to Independence We help students build an understanding of how they learn and the supports they need. We help them learn to monitor their own thinking, transfer ownership of accommodations to students over time, and empower students to ask for supports and help they need to be successful. Each student graduates with self-advocacy skills to think and act independently.