



## Druid Hills Middle School Special Education Needs/Inclusion Policy



### I. Philosophy/Purpose

IB World Schools have a responsibility to provide equal access to the curriculum and academic rigor for all students, regardless of individual abilities and needs.

Druid Hills Middle believe all students can learn and have a right to a holistic and inclusive education in a caring and stimulating environment. The purpose of this policy is to provide all students equal access to the curriculum and provide differentiation to students who made need extra support or challenges beyond the general curriculum. We place great emphasis that every educator is an educator of all student. We believe all learners belong and experience equal opportunities to participate and engage in quality learning by ensuring all teachers are aware of and provide for students with special educational needs. This belief is reflected in our school motto, "Improving Growth and Achievement through Quality Teaching and Learning every day."

### II. Definitions

- A. Special Education Needs (SEN) – refers to any student who shows a need for extra support or challenge beyond the general curriculum.
- B. Inclusion – Inclusion is an ongoing process that aims to increase access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers.
- C. Co-teaching (collaborative teaching) - Two or more people sharing responsibility for teaching some or all of the students assigned to a classroom, involving the distribution of responsibility among people for planning, instruction and evaluation of a classroom of students.
- D. Differentiation – an instructional design model that modifies the written, taught, and assessed curriculum in order to meet individual needs.

*(The definitions stated are from IB Continuum: Learning diversity and inclusion in IB programmes, 2016.)*

### III. Common Practices of the IB Continuum

#### A. Inclusion Components

We promote the development of International Mindedness in all of our students through the IB Learner Profile.

We are committed to teaching through inquiry in all subject areas.

We provide pathways to second language acquisition for all students in addition to supporting mother tongue languages.

We provide co-teaching classes for students who are identified with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD), Emotional Disabilities (ED), and who are English Language Learners (ELL).

#### B. Assessment

All teachers utilize a variety of formative assessments to determine individual student needs and abilities and to tailor subsequent instruction. Examples of formative assessments include: Exit Ticket, Check for Understanding, Ticket Out the Door, Discussion of Essential Questions, Quick Writes, Graphic Organizers, and Think, Pair, Share.

Teachers develop summative assessments that are differentiated to provide necessary accommodations, challenges, and student choice.

Teachers may use a modified MYP subject rubric to allow a student to demonstrate his/her understanding at their level of understanding.

#### C. Support

Classroom Support: Support for students with special educational needs and abilities may include curriculum modification, enrichment activities, classroom accommodations, small group instruction, or one-on-one support. These supports will be based on the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) for SLD or ED students and students ACCESS scores based upon World-class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Can -Do descriptors.

The General Education and Special Education Teacher or ESOL teacher work collaboratively to plan and modify a task/lesson/or assignment in order to support a student's success without diminishing the essence of the task.

The preferred co-teaching models of Parallel Teaching, Station Teaching, Alternative Teaching, Team Teaching, or One Teach, One Assist are implemented daily. According to Marilyn Friend and Lynne Cook, "Co-teaching allows for more intense and individualized instruction in the general education setting increasing access to the general curriculum while decreasing stigma for students with special needs."

Other services: When it is determined that a student would benefit from additional support, services will be based on the student's IEP.

#### D. Documentation

Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are written for students who are identified for special education services. Federal and state laws dictate that goals and objectives of an individual's IEP supersedes the requirements of IB. All attempts will be made to incorporate the principles and standards of IB into the educational experiences for students with special needs.

Copies of student accommodations (504 plan), Behavior Intervention Plans (BIP), Individualized Language Plan (ILP), and other IEP documents will be given to teachers who instruct the student.

IEP progress reports are sent home with the student at the same time regular progress reports are sent home, every 4.5 weeks interval.

#### E. Staff Development and Collaboration

Teachers receive staff development on co-teaching as a strategy to meet special educational needs.

Teachers receive staff development on Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) to meet academic needs of English learners.

Teachers are strongly encouraged to become Gifted certified to learn additional instructional strategies to meet the academic needs of our gifted learners.

All teachers (including SEN and ESOL teachers) meet horizontally and vertically to collaborate on curriculum and assessment, to reflect on student learning, and plan for differentiation.

#### F. Document Review

A committee will be formed annually to review the Inclusion Practices for SEN students. The committee will be made up of Head of School, IB Coordinator, Academic Coach, Lead Teacher for Special Education (LTSE), Special Education Department Chair, English Second Language Dept Chair, Gifted Liaison Teacher, and General Education Teacher. The purpose of the committee will be to review the current document, revise as needed, and plan how to communicate current practices to stakeholders.

#### References:

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