

**James B. Sanderlin K-8, an IB World School
Inclusive Education Policy**

Mission Statement

James B. Sanderlin IB World School is committed to teaching and learning with the brain and heart in mind. Our diverse community of active lifelong learners will use an inquiry approach through our challenging programmes to become successful internationally minded citizens.

Introduction & Purpose

The purpose of this document is to communicate to all stakeholders in our IB community - administrators, teachers, students, and parents - the programme expectations for creating and maintaining an inclusive environment for all learners as required by International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO). This document also provides clear guidelines and responsibilities of all stakeholders.

Program Philosophy

It is the philosophy of both the IBO and James B. Sanderlin K-8 that every child will succeed and will be provided with creative thinking and learning skills, which will help them become caring citizens who are reflective members of society and productive contributors in our global community. Therefore, it is our vision, in the context of the inclusive nature of the IBO, that all students receive the necessary resources, guidance, **accommodations**, and differentiation needed to scaffold their skills to the highest level of personal success.

The International Baccalaureate Primary and Middle Years Programmes recognize that students come from a variety of cultures, backgrounds, and have a range of academic, physical and other needs. Many students may have a recognized, special educational need; other students may have special needs that have not yet been determined. Examples of these special needs include, but may not be limited to:

- **Specific learning disabilities** (such as dyslexia and dyscalculia)
- **Communication disorders** (such as speech or language impairments)
- **Emotional and behavioral difficulties**
- Physical difficulties affecting mobility
- Sensory impairments (such as visual or hearing difficulties)
- Medical conditions (such as asthma, epilepsy and diabetes)
- Mental health conditions (such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, eating disorders, and anxiety)
- Gifted and talented students
- English language learners

James B. Sanderlin K-8 implements the PYP and MYP utilizing inclusive teaching techniques. Teachers design learning experiences that allow all students, including those who have varied exceptionalities, to meet the rigorous standards of the IBO. Teachers provide all students with opportunities to achieve these goals through carefully constructed differentiated teaching strategies in order to maximize students' potential. This also allows the student to demonstrate learning in different ways.

Support Given To Diverse Learners within the School Student Body

<u>Type of Support</u>	<u>Person(s) Administering Support</u>	<u>Person Responsible for Plan</u>
Individualized Education Plan (IEP)	ESE Teachers & Assistants, Classroom Teachers	ESE Case Manager
504 Plan	Classroom Teachers, Staff	504 Coordinators
Counseling Services	School Counselors	School Counselors
School Health Services	School Nurse	School Nurse
Social Work Services	School Social Worker	School Social Worker
Psychological Services	School Psychologist	School Psychologist
Gifted Services (EP)	Gifted Teacher, Classroom Teachers	EP Case Manager
ESOL	ESOL Certified Classroom Teacher	School Counselor

School-Based Leadership Team and MTSS

The intervention procedures for students who need additional academic and behavioral support to succeed in the general education environment is a multi-tiered system of support (**MTSS**) that aligns resources so that the intervention services increase in intensity in each successive tier. Tier 1 instruction encompasses the general curriculum that all students receive. Some students who do not meet grade level expectations and require additional instructional support will receive tier 2 interventions in the classroom, which is monitored using a Progress Monitoring Plan (PMP) by their teacher. For a few students who continue to struggle to meet expectations with tier 2 interventions, they may be placed in tier 3, where they receive intensive daily interventions in a small group with a specialized intervention teacher and are monitored over time.

The **Problem Solving/ MTSS** model addresses both academic and behavior needs of students through interventions developed to meet those needs. The basic elements of PS/MTSS are required components in the reauthorization of Every Student Succeeds Act (2015) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 2004). PS/MTSS is an example of Early Intervention Services (EIS), mandated by the reauthorization of IDEA. PS/MTSS serves as a process to ensure the quality and validity of classroom instruction by progress monitoring all students. This process helps to differentiate among students who are not progressing within the Tier 1 level of instruction due to a learning and/or behavior disability.

The following are necessary components to consider evaluation for support plans (**IEP/504** plans)

- Observations - minimum of at least one in the general education classroom
- Review of existing data and any medical diagnosis
- Parent conferences
- Vision and hearing screenings
- Evidence-based interventions

If the Tier 3 **Problem Solving Team (MTSS)** suspects an exceptionality, they may make a decision to refer a student for an evaluation to determine if an exceptionality exists which would require exceptional education services. A comprehensive and individual evaluation is conducted in all areas of suspected exceptionality to determine:

- Whether the child has an exceptionality
- The educational needs of the child
- Whether the child needs exceptional student education and related services

If a student is determined eligible for ESE, an Individual Education Plan (**IEP**) is written to address the goals and objectives in all areas of need for the student.

A reevaluation may occur not more than once a year, unless the parent and the school district agree otherwise and must occur at least once every three years, unless the parent and the school district agree that a reevaluation is unnecessary.

If a student has a disability or impairment (permanent or temporary) but is not eligible for ESE services, a **504** plan may be developed to make certain **accommodations** in order that a student may be successful in the general education classroom.

504 Evaluations can be completed with or without medical diagnoses. Evaluations are completed using historical data like past grades, test histories, and behavior interventions or disciplinary data. Parent, student, and teacher input is also taken into account to determine eligibility. **504** plans provide **accommodations** to "level the playing field" and give the eligible student access to instruction at the same level as average peers without disability. This does not provide modification to instructional standards, but can help students in need of environmental **accommodations** to succeed in class.

504 Evaluations can be requested by teachers and parents of the student any time a disability is suspected or known that affects a major life activity that may require accommodation to provide equal access to instruction. Any request should be sent to the school's PYP or MYP **504** coordinator.

Roles & Responsibilities of Stakeholders Regarding IEP and 504 Plans

The School:

- School counselors and Special Education case managers will provide the teachers with a copy of all **IEP**'s and **504** plans, additionally, all instructional and support staff have access to exceptional learning plans (**IEP/EP/504**) in Focus or in the student's file.
- Exceptional education case managers and/or school counselors will provide updates and host meetings for updates in **IEP/EP**'s and **504** plans.

- Site coordinators and counselors will oversee and supervise classroom **accommodations** as well as provide examination **accommodations** as needed.
- Schools will facilitate the provisions of appropriate as specified by the student's **IEP** or **504** plan.
- The classroom teacher, in conjunction with the exceptional education case manager, will familiarize him/herself with the nature and needs of his/her students and accommodate them by utilizing school and MyIB resources.
- The classroom teacher will provide differentiation and **accommodations**, in conjunction with the exceptional education case manager, as needed and required for student success and as outlined in the student's **IEP**, **EP**, or **504** plan.
- The teacher will maintain discretion and confidentiality in providing these services.
- The teacher will provide copies of students' **accommodations** to substitute teachers in the event of absence so that continuity of services may continue and the students are supported.
- Teachers will honor Child Find obligations by identifying students they suspect might have a disability and may need supportive services or evaluation. Child Find triggers may include:
 - Deficiencies in grades, even with tier 2 or 3 interventions
 - Large discrepancies between class grades and test performance
 - Behaviors that create a substantial disruption to the student's learning or the learning of others
 - Student receives more than 4 referrals in a year
 - Student referral to **MIC**
 - Teacher receives notice from student's parent/guardian that they have a disability

The Parent/Guardian:

- Families will make requests for child studies or services from the school as they are needed.
- Families will provide documentation to school officials for **IEP's** and **504**.
- Families will communicate with teachers and coordinators concerning their observations as to their child's needs to facilitate appropriate intervention strategies.

The Student:

- PYP students will actively participate in additional support opportunities and will communicate their learning needs as best as possible.
- MYP students will be proactive in seeking assistance from their teachers and the coordinator to meet their learning needs.

Strategies for Meeting the Needs of Diverse Learners

Best Practice

The IBO distinguishes five principles of best practice to assist all students in accessing the curriculum and in developing as a whole person. These principles are:

- **Affirming identity and building self esteem**

Students learn better in conditions that promote social and emotional growth. Welcoming diversity and developing the whole child through the IB Learner Profile attributes best achieve this.

- **Valuing prior knowledge**

Learning occurs when students make relevant connections between their current knowledge and new knowledge. Through its transdisciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches, the PYP and MYP build on what students know as they make connections across the curriculum.

- **Scaffolding**

Scaffolding instruction considers the student's current ability to demonstrate knowledge and gradually builds from concrete to abstract understanding as supports are gradually removed and students become more independent in their learning. Examples of scaffolds include visual aids, demonstrations, dramatization, and collaborative small group instruction.

- **Extending learning**

Providing students with several different ways to learn and practice a concept extends their learning and fosters a deeper understanding. It is important that students recognize opportunities for learning outside of the school setting to become life-long learners.

- **Approaches to Learning (ATL) Skills**

ATL skills will be part of the practice for addressing the needs of diverse learners, at all parts of the learning spectrum.

Differentiation

The nature of diversity brings about the need for differentiation. Differentiation is an ongoing process in which the teacher reviews and adopts instruction to meet the needs of all students. This process becomes more seamless as teachers develop relationships with their students and can be fostered through a working relationship with families, as they know the student

best. As students develop metacognitive awareness of themselves as learners, they are better able to advocate for themselves and become more independent.

Inclusion

Inclusion of all students in the general education setting increases access to the curriculum while breaking down barriers. It promotes a respectful and collaborative learning environment between colleagues and students alike.

Assessment

Assessment is an important part of the learning process. It provides students with a venue for reflection of personal growth and provides the teacher with valuable insight that will direct future lessons.

Summary Matrix of Expectations for Meeting the Needs of Diverse Learners

	Teachers will...	Families will...	Students will...
Best Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote a class and school environment that welcomes and embraces diversity Encourages developing attributes outlined in the IB Learner Profile Consider the learner's prior understanding when planning and teaching learning engagements Scaffold instruction from concrete to abstract Provide cognitively rich materials and experiences that include all learners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with teachers to help them become more knowledgeable and aware of their child's needs and differences Support student learning by making connections between prior knowledge and new understandings discovered in the classroom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show open-mindedness to diversity of perspectives to enhance learning Demonstrate open-mindedness and acceptance of new learning experiences in the classrooms Learn to work collaboratively to enhance learning
Differentiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a variety of learning engagements relevant to students' academic and cultural needs, to achieve common goals Continuously review and adapt goals and teaching methods Implement effective strategies for specific goals Be open and flexible to different approaches to learning Guide students to access content through various resources to ensure student success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support student learning Share effective strategies observed at home with the school Be open and flexible to different approaches to learning Guide students to access content through resources on their level Maintain open communication with the school to better assist teachers with the learning process of the child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand themselves as a learner Grow as their own advocates Be open and flexible to different approaches to learning Play an active role in planning, carrying out, and reviewing what is learned Develop productive relationships with teachers and family members
Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage in collaborative teaching approaches Organize classrooms such that diversity is evident, accessible, and used as a resource View differences as opportunities for enriched learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage in positive, cooperative interactions with teachers Collaborate with teachers to help them become more knowledgeable and aware of differences that may exist in the classroom Be an advocate for the student 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage in becoming active, compassionate, and life-long learners who understand that other people with differences can also be right Respect differences in the classroom as they arise and ask clarifying questions for better understanding

Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly assess students to drive instruction • Encourage and develop independence and agency • Develop project-based assessments to match the strength and special needs of all learners, and to include elements of social interaction and personal growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage and develop independence and agency • Prepare students for optimal school performance including diet, rest/sleep, and other basic needs • Provide support and encourage critical thinking at home • Provide structures conducive to learning in the home (i.e., quiet study area/time) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be reflective learners • Provide constructive feedback to peers • Self-advocate • Be open minded and become independent and accountable for learning • Take responsibility for basic needs • Work cooperatively with teachers, peers, and family members
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Terminology

504 Plan: An individualized plan developed for a student with a mental or physical impairment that specifies what **accommodations** and/or services they will get in school to "level the playing field" so that they have access to learning equal to the average peer without a disability. The plan follows from the requirements of Section **504** of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and also applies to extracurricular activities and non-student situations such as employment.

Accommodation: An alteration in the way material is presented, or in the environmental setting, or task demands and/or conditions as necessitated to "work around" interference from a disability that does not modify the curriculum or standards of instruction.

Communication Disorders: Speech and language issues characterized by communication problems (for example receptive/expressive language impairment, speech sound disorders and fluency and stuttering disorders).

Individualized Educational Plan (IEP): A written education plan for a school-aged child with disabilities developed by a team of professionals (teachers, therapists, etc.) and the child's parents. The program is written for a student who has first found to be eligible under IDEA for special education. It must specify goals and objectives for all areas of deficit that are disability-related. It must include a statement of any supports or services that the student requires, showing how often they will be provided, for what duration, and in what setting. To the extent that the student's needs cannot be met in the regular classroom, the **IEP** must indicate what proportion of the time the student will be in the mainstream setting.

The **MTSS** Team is a multi-disciplinary team of professionals assigned to work with Tier 1 and Tier 2 data in establishing interventions and instruction at the respective tier. The Tier 3 Problem Solving Team is a multi-disciplinary team of school professionals assigned to conduct individual problem solving when students are not responding positively to Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions.

Problem Solving/Responses to Intervention (PS/RtI): A tiered framework for instructing, assessing, and providing academic and behavioral interventions for all students through implementation of scientifically based instructional practices based on data.

Varying Exceptionalities (VE): This refers to students with more than one disability; the Varying Exceptionalities (VE) teacher is a special education teacher who works with students exhibiting a variety of disabilities.