

El Sereno Middle School and Wilson High School IB Policy for Students Who Have Special Needs

Philosophy

As IB World Schools, El Sereno Middle School and Wilson High School strive to meet the unique needs of special education students so that each learner will meet or exceed high standards of achievement in academic and non-academic skills necessary for success in a global community.

Every child can learn, and all students have the right and opportunity to participate in all programs available at El Sereno Middle School and Wilson High School. We use a variety of techniques to meet the individual needs and varied learning styles of all students.

Therefore all students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) should receive the necessary resources, guidance, accommodations, and differentiation needed to attain their highest level of personal success.

Purpose

Our policy for students who have special educational needs (SEN) guides our practices. We strive to:

- Meet the diverse educational needs of all students.
- Define the practices needed to support all students.
- Provide all students with the opportunity to participate in all educational programs.
- Monitor our practices and adjust for success.

Background

Federal Requirements

Three existing federal statutes address the rights of students with disabilities to receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE); Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). FAPE is a civil right rooted in the Fourteenth Amendment of the US Constitution, which includes equal protection and due process clauses.

State and federal laws must be followed and the appropriate accommodations must be made. The federal government guarantees each preschool and school-aged child an education in the least restrictive environment (aligned with IB philosophies). We must provide this education to all students with special needs between the ages of 3 and 21 years. This was written into federal law as PL 94-142, passed in 1975. Since then the law has been modified and refined by the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA 2004).

The IDEA act requires that public schools create an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for each student who is found to be eligible under both the federal and state eligibility/disability

standards. The IEP is the cornerstone of a student's educational program. The IEP specifies the services to be provided and how often, describes the student's present levels of performance and how the student's disabilities affect academic performance, and specifies accommodations and modifications to be provided for the student. (Public Law 108-466 – 108th Congress).

Inclusion

Inclusion at El Sereno Middle School and Wilson High School is an ongoing process of increasing access and engagement in learning for all students. The school and community and other authorized bodies actively seek to remove barriers to learning and participation. All students should have access to an appropriate education that affords them the opportunity to achieve their personal potential. The majority of students with special education needs will be successfully included in mainstream education with the right skills, training, strategies and support. Mainstream education will not be appropriate for every student. Equally, just because mainstream education may not be appropriate at a particular stage, it does not prevent the student from being included successfully at any other stage.

Accommodations/Modifications

We provide accommodations and modifications to all students who have special educational needs. Guidelines for the accommodations and modifications we follow are specified in the "IBO Diploma Program Candidates with Special Assessment Needs" and "Special Educational Needs Within the international Baccalaureate Programmes. "

Best Practices

We follow four basic principles of good instructional practice that promote equal access to the curriculum for all learners across the continuum. These practices are particularly relevant to those with special needs.

- **Affirming identity and building self-esteem**
Affirming identity and building self-esteem are crucial elements of instructional practices. Social and emotional conditions for learning that value all languages and cultures and affirm the identity of each learner promote self-esteem.
- **Prior Knowledge**
When planning the range of new learning that can take place in any individual, previous learning experiences or prior knowledge are taken into consideration.
- **Scaffolding**
Scaffolding is a dynamic practice in the learning process. It is a temporary strategy that enables learners to accomplish a task that would otherwise be too difficult to accomplish.
- **Differentiation**
Differentiation is the process of identifying, with each learner, the most effective strategies for achieving agreed goals. Differentiation can help learners access the content at an appropriate level through a variety of resources.

Diploma Program Assessment

Detailed guidelines of the Diploma Program Assessment for candidates with special assessment needs is set forth in the policy guide “IBO Diploma Programme Candidates with special assessment needs.” Accommodations must be authorized by the IEP and formal request to IBO.

1. Principles (Sections 1.1 – 1.21)
2. Guidelines (Sections 2.1 – 2.2.15)
3. Arrangements not requiring authorization (Sections 3.1 – 3.7)
4. Special arrangements (Sections 4.1- 4.15.4. For example, additional time, rest periods as needed, assistive technology, scribe)

Works Cited

IBO document, Candidates with Special Assessment Needs, 2009

IBO document, Special Educational Needs within the International Baccalaureate Programmes, 2010

Henrico County International Baccalaureate Programs Special Needs Guidelines, 2010-2011

Mesa Public Schools IB K-12 Continuum Special Education Needs Policy