

The vision of Westchester Academy for International Studies is to provide a challenging and varied curriculum in which all students can succeed. The curriculum will develop an international awareness (consciousness), including a focus on international relations and international problem solving, to create a love of learning and emphasize good citizenship. In order to complete our vision, some students will need additional support to reach their fullest potential and academic success.

This document embraces program policies of the International Baccalaureate (IB) for middle years, diploma, career-related and certificate candidates with special assessment needs to support all students in grades 6 - 12. “The IB believes that all candidates should be allowed to demonstrate their ability under assessment conditions that are as fair as possible. Standard assessment conditions may put candidates with learning support requirements at a disadvantage by preventing them from demonstrating their level of attainment. Inclusive arrangements may be authorized in these circumstances. This policy applies to candidates with long-term or permanent challenges.” (*Candidates with assessment access requirements*)

Our open enrollment policy supports a wide range of student learners. Some students may have an identified educational need while others may not be diagnosed or identified.

Examples of these needs are:

- “Attention deficit disorder/ attention deficit hyperactivity disorder
- Dyscalculia
- Dyslexia
- Dyspraxia- developmental coordination difficulties, motor learning difficulties
- Emotional and behavioral difficulties
- Gifted and talented or exceptionally able
- Hearing impairment/deafness
- Medical conditions/chronic illness
- Mental health issues
- Physical disabilities
- Speech, language and communication needs
- Visual impairments” (*Primary Years Programme, Middle Years Programme, Diploma Programme and IB Career-related Certificate Meeting student learning diversity in the classroom*)

### **United States of America Special Education Statutes**

There are three Federal laws that apply to special needs of children, in order to ensure they receive a free and appropriate education in the least restrictive environment. The federal laws that address the rights of children with disabilities to receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) are:

**The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (1975).** Congress reauthorized the IDEA in 2004 and most recently amended the IDEA through Public Law 114-95, the Every Student Succeeds Act, in December 2015. In the law, Congress states: Disability is a natural part of the human experience and in no way diminishes the right of individuals to participate in or contribute to society. Improving educational results for children with disabilities is an essential element of our national policy of ensuring equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency for individuals with disabilities.

**Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973**

**The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (1990).**

*Note: The Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution, which includes Equal Protection and Due Process clauses, contains that FAPE is a civil right. Each state has its own criteria for eligibility, available services, and implementation of these three laws.*

To be protected under Section 504, a student must be determined to: (1) have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; or (2) have a record of such an impairment; or (3) be regarded as having such an impairment. Section 504 requires that school districts, receiving Federal financial assistance, provide a free and appropriate public education to qualified students in their jurisdictions who have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

Public Law 94-142, passed in 1975, guarantees all handicapped students age 3 to 21 receive an education in the least restrictive environment as their non-handicapped peers do. The Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA 2004) has modified and clarified this law. IDEA requires an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for each student who is eligible under both federal and state eligibility/disability standards.

The ADA (1990) requires all non-religious educational institutions to meet the needs of children with psychiatric disorders. This prohibits the denial of educational services, programs or activities to students with disabilities and prohibits discrimination against all such students.

### **Response to Intervention**

RtI is the practice of meeting the academic and behavioral needs of all students through a variety of services containing the following key elements:

- High-quality instruction and scientific research-based tiered interventions aligned with individual student need
- Frequent monitoring of student progress to make results-based academic and/or behavioral decisions
- Application of student response data to important educational decisions (such as those regarding placement, intervention, curriculum, and instructional goals and methodologies)

The instructional approaches used within the general education setting should result in academic and/or behavioral progress for the majority of the students. Struggling students are identified using data-based student progress monitoring and provided intensive instruction. The use of scientifically validated curricula and teaching methods expected in an RtI model leads to data-based school improvement. (*Texas Education Agency, Curriculum Programs - Response to Intervention*)

### **Learning Support**

Westchester Academy for International Studies and Spring Branch ISD provide professional support, in addition, to classroom instruction for qualified students. Currently, we offer support for Dyslexia, Speech, English as a Second Language (E.S.L.), Gifted and Talented, STAT and Special Education.

There are also students who receive support through collaboration or consultation with the students' teachers. Incorporating differentiated lessons/teaching strategies, utilizing small group instruction, and choice of task, when appropriate, teachers continue to increase a range of learning support for all students.

In addition, students are offered the following support to scaffold access to learning:

- Tutorials- before school, after school, during extended lunch periods and by request
- Math and/or Reading Lab- a parallel support class for 6<sup>th</sup> -8<sup>th</sup> graders not passing Texas Assessments
- Practical Writing- a parallel support class for English I and II students not passing Texas Assessments.
- Learning Lab- during school support for testing, extended time, tutorials, and online courses

By using a variety of tools, teachers and staff work to provide differentiated instruction to a diverse population. All students are advised of program design and requirements to assist appropriate placement and academic success. When needed at the Diploma Program level, the DP Coordinator and the Special Education teacher will submit to IB any appropriate accommodations forms with documentation for qualified students in accordance with *Candidates with Special Assessment Needs*.

### **Other Accommodations**

Additional individualized academic support may include: IEP, 504, student contract, assistive technology devices or services or both, physical needs accommodated, small group or one on one learning, or testing accommodations.

For special education and 504 students allowable accommodations may include, but are not necessarily limited to the following:

- Extended time for testing
  - Opportunity to repeat and explain instructions Assignment notebook
  - Minimal auditory distractions Encouragement for classroom participation
  - Large print, Braille/peer to read aloud Behavior intervention plan
  - Assistive technology as defined by the committee
  - Altered format of exams, such as highlighted instructions or alternative spacing of questions
  - Altered assignments as needed for persons with motoric or visual impairment
- (*SBISD Program of Studies Guide*)

Students with Individual Education Plans participate in all assessments with the accommodations defined by the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Committee. Students learning the language of instruction (which is also the language of assessment) are assessed according to the individual plans determined by the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) and per state requirements. WAIS has an Assessment Policy, which includes this information.

### **Resources:**

Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975, Public Law 94-142.

Frank C. Martin International K-8 Center, Special Educational Needs Policy, Inclusion Policy for

SPED Students, viewed March 9, 2012.

High School Program of Studies Guide 2017-18, Spring Branch Independent School District, Houston, Texas; [http://www.springbranchisd.com/instruc/guide/HS\\_ProgStudies.pdf](http://www.springbranchisd.com/instruc/guide/HS_ProgStudies.pdf) , last viewed February 7, 2018.

IB Publication: *Candidates with assessment access requirements* (August 2017)

IB Publication: *Career-related Programme From Principles into Practice* (December 2015)

IB Publication: *DP: From Principles into Practice* (April 2015)

IB Publication: *The IB guide to inclusive education: a resource for whole school development*; <https://resources.ibo.org/ib/topic/Inclusive-education/resource/11162-37963/?c=65c2a681>, last viewed April 13, 2018.

IB Publication: *Learning diversity and inclusion in IB programmes* (January 2016)

IB Publication: *Middle Years Programme Candidates with assessment access requirements* (March 2015)

IB Publication: *MYP: From Principles into Practice* (September 2017)

IB Publication: *Primary Years Programme, Middle Years Programme, Diploma Programme and IB Career-related Certificate Meeting student learning diversity in the classroom.* (May 2013)

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, 20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq.

Middle School Program of Studies Guide 2017-18, Spring Branch Independent School District, Houston, Texas; [http://www.springbranchisd.com/instruc/guide/MS\\_ProgStudies.pdf](http://www.springbranchisd.com/instruc/guide/MS_ProgStudies.pdf) , last viewed February 7, 2018.

*Services In School For Children With Special Needs: What Parents Need To Know*, American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, [https://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families\\_and\\_Youth/Facts\\_for\\_Families/FFF-Guide/Services-In-School-For-Children-With-Special-Needs-What-Parents-Need-To-Know-083.aspx](https://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families_and_Youth/Facts_for_Families/FFF-Guide/Services-In-School-For-Children-With-Special-Needs-What-Parents-Need-To-Know-083.aspx) , last viewed April 13, 2018.

*Special Education Rules and Regulations*, Texas Education Agency (TEA); [https://tea.texas.gov/Academics/Special\\_Student\\_Populations/Special\\_Education/Programs\\_and\\_Services/Special\\_Education\\_Rules\\_and\\_Regulations/](https://tea.texas.gov/Academics/Special_Student_Populations/Special_Education/Programs_and_Services/Special_Education_Rules_and_Regulations/), last viewed April 13, 2018.

<http://www.idea.ed.gov>, IDEA Building The Legacy of IDEA 2004

<http://www2.ed.gov/print/about/offices/list/ocr/504faq.html>

<http://www.rti4success.org> , National Center on Response to Intervention

This policy supports and is supported by these Westchester Academy for International Studies policies: Academic Honesty Policy, Assessment Policy, and Language Policy.

**Policy Review Process:**

This policy will be reviewed and revised in accordance with policy changes in IB, the Americans with Disabilities Act requirements, and state and local policies every five years. Reviewed by committee and presented to faculty and staff on May 2, 2018.