

EDMONDS-WOODWAY HIGH SCHOOL – SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY

The mission of the Edmonds School District Special Education Department is to support the highest quality core instruction through meaningful assessment, early intervention and individualized programming to meet the needs of students with disabilities ensuring that they reach their fullest potential. We believe that students with disabilities will achieve their fullest potential when they have access to the instruction and community of learners in general education.

As a part of its mission, the teachers, staff, students, and community of Edmonds-Woodway High School are dedicated to empowering students to achieve educational excellence while demonstrating integrity and compassion through responsible citizenship.

As a fundamental element of our mission is to achieve educational excellence for **all** students, we must ensure that the philosophies and principles of the IB program continue to **serve** all students – and that access and engagement in learning is increased by identifying and removing barriers to the IB Program at EWHS. Because of this, EWHS is proud to offer an “IB for All” program, allowing students to select – without prior approval – the number of IB classes they wish to take. Note: From a functional standpoint, some classes (like Physics or Mathematics) do have prior coursework requirements, but all prerequisite classes are based on student choice, and not the teacher selection for placement in an IB cohort.

Admittedly, inclusion has been the central focus of the work of David Quinn, the IB Coordinator, since he accepted the position in 2011; the results do, in fact, speak for themselves. Enrollment in IB classes has increased in every student segmentation: ethnicity, number of free/reduced lunch students participating in the program as a whole, number of students attempting certificates, number of students in the full-IB cohort, % of EWHS students participating in one or more IB classes, and number of students with special education needs participating in the program.

We are, without question, exceptionally supportive of the diversity of our student population – and of their learning needs. Our teacher evaluation method – the Danielson model – explicitly includes indicators and standards on inclusion, differentiated instruction, and supporting the learning needs of each student, as individuals. Further, we support the following practices in the IBO’s Programme Standards and Practices (2014):

- A9 - The school supports access for students to the IB programme(s) and philosophy
- B1:5 - The school develops and implements policies and procedures that support the programme
- B2:8 - The school provides support for its students with learning and/or special education needs and support for their teachers
- C1:6 - Collaborative planning and reflection incorporates differentiation for students learning needs and styles
- C3:10 - Teaching and learning differentiate instruction to meet students’ learning needs and styles

SCHOOL ORGANIZATION

As a school based in Washington State (USA), EWHS is guided by both local and national laws that ensure that the policies and procedures in place treat all students equally, and that we support points of access for all students to find success in the IB program.

Special education and related services are provided to children with disabilities who are eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The Edmonds Public School District follows the federal guidelines of providing a variety of services and placement continuum options. Services are provided to students with severe/profound levels of disabilities who are nonverbal and/or are medically fragile; to students with moderate levels of disabilities who may have cognitive deficits or significant behavioral issues; and to students with mild levels of disabilities who may be struggling in one or more academic areas. All types of services and placement settings are determined by the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team with input from the parent and (if possible) the child. Working together as a team (parents and school personnel), we challenge each student based on their individual levels of functioning and performance to be successful in our school, home and community.

Students who have a medically-diagnosed need for a special accommodation or individual educational plan are granted additional support in a variety of ways. In general terms, the District provides services to students in middle and high school with developmental disabilities. These programs include Intensive Learning Support (ILS), Lifeskills, Learning Support (LS), and Vocational Programs.

One additional group that is also covered by state legal requirements is the Gifted/Highly-Capable student population. In Washington State, specific laws direct that Gifted students be provided a “gifted pathway” that leads to graduation. The district’s response is to allow all gifted students access to the IB program, and then allow those students to remain in as many – or as few – IB courses as they wish to take.

Teachers are required, by law, to follow the plans and provide accommodations to these students, typically served by what is locally referred to as a “504 Plan” or an “IEP.” These plans allow specific and explicit accommodations to best serve their ability to find success in the classroom. These plans are directly linked to teaching and learning, assessment, and language policies, as they are required to be followed, by law.

Frequently, these special accommodations allow students to seek additional time to complete assignments, preferential seating, the use of a word processor for exams or – in specific cases – the use of an adult aide throughout the day, paid for by the school district. As EWHS houses the largest deaf and hard-of-hearing student population in the region, there is a large DHH student group accessing IB classes; these students are provided with interpreters in all of their classes. These policies are consistent with IB philosophy and practices, and D1 forms are completed to provide accommodations during IB exams.

In addition to student accommodations, EWHS hosts a Learning Support department, with 3 full-time teaching staff, to support additional instruction for a select group of students.

SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT

The Edmonds School District – in association with the Edmonds Education Association – negotiates professional development directly into teacher contracts, and into the academic year. As an example, during the 2018-19 school year, seven professional development days are granted to the teaching staff; in addition, 11 district-wide early release days are included in the annual contract. On many occasions, our school's Special Education staff creates specific workshops related to working with students with special needs. As more Special Education students access IB classes, there may be a need to increase Special Education staffing specifically for IB students; that likelihood is dependent on enrollment, however, and – as of now – no additional staffing is needed.

RESOURCES

On-staff, EWHS has access to four Learning Support staff experts, as well as one psychologist, a Behavior Specialist, access to a Drug & Alcohol Counselor, and a large group of Learning Support professionals at the district level, to assist students with special needs and teachers with SE students in their classrooms.

Students are identified at the school-level, and our School Psychologist administers the one-on-one assessments to determine needs. Currently, the Edmonds School District is using the Washington Alternate Assessment System-Developmentally Appropriate Proficiency Exam (WAAS-DAPE).

Our Learning Support experts have extensive experience working with students, both in classroom environments and on a one-on-one basis. As a part of their teaching responsibilities, they work with classroom instructors to modify and refine curriculum, as needed. The deployment of Learning Support staffing is a part of the responsibilities of the Principal.

The EWHS building and campus is fully accessible to all students and is compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act, and students with physical disabilities are granted key-access to an elevator to help them access all areas of the building.

STAKEHOLDERS

The "IB for All" philosophy, and our focus on inclusion, applies to all members of the EWHS family. No staff or student can be discriminated against because of a disability, and we seek to include all of our students – from all aspects of the educational spectrum – in our daily activities. Because our school mascot is a Warrior, we insist that all members of the Warrior Family (including profoundly physically and mentally-challenged students) be allowed to participate in classes, assemblies, and sports, to the extent that they wish to participate. Students are made aware of our policies of inclusion upon enrollment, and we model participation during all-school assemblies. In addition to our student population, our parent population also features adults with accommodation needs. We provide DHH interpreters for all parent meetings, and real-time voice translation for phone calls to parents. Finally, communicating and discussing the needs of this segment of our larger community is a distinct focus of our district's work.

COMMUNICATION

The school's inclusion policy is communicated to incoming parents, and to parents at various grade-level meetings throughout the year. In addition, it is also mentioned on our school and district websites. We use Managebac and WA State's Skyward system to communicate with parents – and local media to communicate with the community – especially during transition periods (between middle school, after each grade level, and during the years of the IB program). IB exam results are communicated directly to students through the use of the IBO website (and individual IB PIN codes distributed to all students, via print and through email). IB exam results become a part of the student's permanent academic record after they are received from the IBO.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Edmonds-Woodway High School, and the Edmonds School District, is covered by FERPA laws, which explicitly govern the confidentiality and dissemination of student data, assessment information, and the special education needs/information of students. Only qualified staff has access to basic student information; only the specific student's instructor has access to information regarding 504/IEP plans; only the IB Coordinator has access to the specific IB records (or accommodation requests) of students in IB classes.

Our district's procedural safeguards are published in the document "Notice of Special Education Procedural Safeguards for Students and Their Families" (October 2013) on our district website at: https://www.edmonds.wednet.edu/departments/special_education/procedural_safeguards__parent_and_student_rights

LEARNING

The learning needs of Special Education Needs students are currently being met. Several students are in a pull-out class that provides them with additional instructional time. The time is intended to allow students to reflect on how to become better students, so they can seek support on their own terms. There are currently deaf and hard-of-hearing students in IB English A: Language and Literature, and they continue to find success.

POLICY DOCUMENTATION / POLICY PROCESSES

Gifted, 504, and IEP programs are documented at the district-level, and included in each student's permanent student file. Each IEP and 504 is reviewed yearly. Gifted status – once given – cannot be revoked. Our SEN policies are primarily governed at the state-level, and our district proactively responds to the individual needs of students as they arrive. As we are governed by federal and state laws, we seek to review policies for individual students immediately upon enrollment – or upon the diagnosis that leads to a Special Education assessment and evaluation.

ESSENTIAL IB READINGS (all published by International Baccalaureate Organization, Cardiff, Wales):

Access and Inclusion Policy (November 2018)

Assessment Principles and Practices – Quality Assessments In A Digital Age – B: Fairness For All – Meeting Candidates Needs (July 2019)

Candidates with Assessment Access Requirements (July 2014)

Diploma Assessment Procedures (September 2019) – B5: Inclusive Access; B6: Candidates affected by adverse, medical or special circumstances

Learning Diversity and Inclusion in IB Programmes – Removing barriers to learning (updated March 2019)

Meeting Student Learning Diversity In The Classroom (2013)

Learning Stories – Academic rigour and inclusion: Accommodating the diverse needs of learnings in a multiple-programme IB World School

What is an IB Education? (May 2017)

Revised 2018-19 School Year