

IB ACCESS AND INCLUSION POLICY



Seven Peaks School
International Baccalaureate
Primary and Middle Years Programme
Authorized School

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PURPOSE, MISSION, AND VISION	3
PROGRAM GOALS	3
INCLUSION	4
SPS TEACHING PRACTICES	4
FOUR PINNACLES OF GOOD PRACTICE	5
SPS CARE PROGRAM	5
CONFIDENTIALITY	7
COMMUNICATION OF INCLUSION POLICY TO THE SPS COMMUNITY	7
DOCUMENT REVIEW PROCESS	7
REFERENCES	8

PURPOSE OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS/INCLUSION POLICY

The Special Educational Needs/Inclusion Policy is a working document developed by a committee of teachers and administrators from Seven Peaks School (SPS). Consistent with the standards and practices of the International Baccalaureate Primary and Middle Years Programme (IB PYP and MYP), this document provides an overview of SPS beliefs and practices as they relate to the exceptional needs of our students. This policy outlines the processes implemented at Seven Peaks to ensure that all students have access to the PYP and MYP curriculum, so that they can fulfill the mission of both the IB Programme and SPS.

At Seven Peaks we believe all students want to learn. As such, we strive to provide all students with a holistic and inclusive education in a caring and stimulating environment. We place great emphasis on the responsibilities of all teachers to be aware of and provide for students with exceptionalities. We believe all students should be responsible for their own learning by taking an active role in identifying, monitoring, and meeting their own learning needs and abilities. We view a student's education as a partnership between the student, the parent(s)/guardian(s), the school and various community resources.

However, as a small, independent private school, our ability to provide support to students with certain exceptionalities is limited. Therefore, parent(s)/guardian(s) may be required to seek out and fund community resources to meet individual student needs.

SPS MISSION AND VISION STATEMENTS

SPS Mission

To inspire a lifelong love of learning in our students. To enable our children to thrive in a complex world. To challenge them within a safe and nurturing community.

SPS Vision

Seven Peaks students will emerge intellectually curious, confident in their education and individuality, compassionate towards others and inspired to do good in the world.

What We Believe

We believe in high academic standards and are committed to sustained investment in our faculty and curriculum.

We believe in building trusting and respectful relationships, attentive to the needs and perspectives of others.

We believe in and respect the Seven Peaks community, ensuring that every student and family has a voice and choice.

We believe that creative problem solving, critical thinking and a global perspective provide the foundation to core academics.

We believe in cultivating the unique gifts of each child.

We believe in the strength and embrace of community: home, school, Central Oregon and the interconnected world beyond.

We believe in the legacy and heritage of our school.

We believe in children remaining children throughout their Seven Peaks experience.

PROGRAM GOALS

The goals of Seven Peaks School's Special Educational Needs programs are:

- To provide a positive and welcoming environment to all learners with varying needs, recognizing and capitalizing on differences and diversity.

- To provide all children access to curriculum through inclusion and differentiated teaching methods.
- To monitor student success as shown through data, and communicate with all stakeholders about students, their progress, and their changing needs.
- To guide all students to reach their unique intellectual capabilities.

INCLUSION

At Seven Peaks School, every effort is made to provide the least restrictive learning environment that appropriately matches the needs of each student. Therefore, inclusion can be implemented differently for each student, depending on many factors such as, but not limited to:

- the student's skill level
- the student's previous learning experiences
- the unit of study
- availability of Educational Specialists and Educational Assistants to support teachers in their classrooms

SPS TEACHING PRACTICES

Differentiation

“Differentiation can help learners access the content at an appropriate level through a variety of resources” (*Learning Diversity in the International Baccalaureate Programs: Special educational needs with the International Baccalaureate programmes* 5). Differentiation is a system of strategies that appropriately structure the curriculum so that each learner can reach they/their true potential. Differentiation “puts students at the center of the planning” helping teachers “respond specifically to their needs” (Heacox 57). Teachers differentiate through various means including, but not limited to:

- Content –Using differentiated teaching practices to accommodate learning goals. Adjusting quantity or format of content.
- Process – Providing variety and choice in how students will learn.
- Product – Capitalizing on students' learning preferences and strengths by permitting them choice when demonstrating their learning.

These modes of differentiation are implemented by the teacher for each learner based on readiness or the learner's profile. Differentiation can take many forms and is closely tied with the Four Principles of Good Practice (see pg 5) outlined by IB.

Collaboration

Collaboration time is provided for staff to promote effective working relationships with colleagues and has been built into our weekly schedule. Curriculum planning, inquiry, instructional delivery, communication related to data and day-to-day interactions, and digital tools for professional collaboration and communication may be addressed during this time. This allows us to discuss strategies, share ideas, plan curriculum, differentiate instruction, design authentic assessment tasks, and standardize grading practices. Through this collaborative time we strive to make instruction accessible to all students, while implementing the IB PYP and MYP.

Continued Education for Staff

SPS values professional development that supports tools and strategies for inclusive teaching. At the beginning of the 2022-23 school year our whole staff participated in a gender diversity training to educate our staff and develop a more inclusive school overall. During the 2021-22 school year inservice week we brought a trainer in to work with our entire staff on developing our differentiation practices. This two day training developed new strategies and understandings around the value of meeting all students needs. Also, in the 2021-22 school year we brought in

outside resources for executive functioning training and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) training through different organizations. The use of these strategies promotes proper language use while giving teachers tools to develop empathy and inclusion.

Extended Learning

We strive to create the social and emotional conditions for learning, while promoting environments that welcome and embrace diversity. At SPS, one of our main instructional goals is to provide student-centered classrooms driven by inquiry. To facilitate the achievement of this goal, teachers rely on subject-specific strategies, as well as whole-school strategies. Reciprocal Teaching is used throughout the subject areas to increase communication and thinking among students. Through the use of Reciprocal Teaching, students at SPS are given opportunities to work collaboratively with their peers while interacting with a variety of contexts and concepts. Teachers in all subject areas have also been instructed in teaching the Approaches to Learning Skills (thinking, research, communication, self-management, and social) to help extend learning for our students. These strategies help students explore angles of an issue, more accurately process information, delve deeper into a concept, and develop empathy as they investigate various perspectives.

Valuing Prior Knowledge

Meaningfully assessing students' existing knowledge, strengths, and interests is an integral part of our admissions process at Seven Peaks. Teachers formatively assess each student's prior knowledge when designing, differentiating, and planning for new learning.

Scaffolding

After determining students' prior knowledge, scaffolding may be incorporated into the learning process to support students learning moving forward, building toward mastery. Scaffolding strategies may include pre-teaching, demonstrations, experiential learning, chunking information, peer mentoring and collaboration, visual aids, templates and/or graphic organizers.

Affirming Identity & Building Self-esteem

At Seven Peaks we are committed to helping students establish a positive identity and self-concept. Our low student-teacher ratio enables us to know and support each child in this valuable part of their development, encouraging the development of the profile traits, and promoting responsible citizenship on an individual basis. Students are empowered to take risks in their learning because they are well-supported by staff. We accomplish these goals by promoting one learner profile trait a month, school-wide, teaching and celebrating each profile trait. We also implement programs to support acceptance and personal well-being as we develop our students' understanding of how to deal with their emotions.

SPS CARE PROGRAM

Seven Peaks has established a program, called CARE. This is our school's commitment to meeting the needs of students with learning differences. To this end, a student may require more individualized support above and beyond our regular teaching practices referenced above.

What is CARE?

The Seven Peaks CARE program offers two support services to students who are experiencing academic and/or social and emotional challenges that are not being mitigated through scaffolding, extended learning, or minor classroom modifications. The CARE program advocates a team approach to supporting our students and is composed of teachers, staff, parents, and outside consultants or specialists, when appropriate.

What CARE is NOT:

CARE plans are not IEP or section 504 plans and are not subject to any legally mandated accommodations or services. The CARE program does not address discipline. Any disciplinary issues or concerns will be referred to and addressed by our Assistant Head of School under the guidance of the SPS Behavioral Philosophy.

CARE Support Services

1) Our school counselor and learning specialist provide guidance, and/or refer students who are exhibiting *exceptionality* in academic functioning to third party support services. *Exceptionality* is defined as learning differences resulting in the need for remediation (lower than expected academic achievement) based on a pattern of data points.

2) Our school counselor provides services and supports students in their social/emotional learning and wellbeing (guidance lessons, small groups & individual counseling), parent support, education, and advocacy to help students find success at school.

Qualification for CARE

There are two ways to qualify for the CARE program:

1) Outside Documentation - If a student has had a professional evaluation by a specialist (e.g., psychologist or neuropsychologist) that resulted in a diagnosis of an exceptionality (e.g., learning difference) or if a student is admitted into SPS with a pre-existing Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 plan established by the public school system. These students qualify for a formalized CARE plan.

2) Teacher Referral - If a student continues to demonstrate exceptionality despite several weeks of documented parent-school communication and individualized classroom modifications and interventions, the teacher will refer the child to the CARE team. This begins the process of qualifying for a CARE plan.

Seven Peaks School has limitations related to specialized resources and personnel. We evaluate each student on a case-by-case basis, in order to ensure the school's ability to provide the student with a quality education. **Parent partnership is a crucial element in determining whether SPS can adequately meet the student's individual needs.** SPS may deny enrollment to a student if the school determines, at its sole discretion, that it cannot adequately serve the needs of the candidate. (See: Admissions Policy for additional information)

CARE: Teacher Referral Flowchart

Teacher Observes:

- Very low assessment scores
- Academic performance *substantially* below in daily work (demonstrating discrepancy between ability and daily performance)
- Constant off-task behaviors due to perceived learning differences
- Chronically producing late or missing work due to perceived learning differences



Regular Classroom Interventions:

- Try at least three interventions in classroom (use [Accommodations Checklist](#))
- Support interventions with incentives and positive reinforcement (e.g., EAGLE cards)
- Try interventions for six-eight weeks in duration
- Document intervention efficacy
- Document evidence of parent communication
 - Consult Parents
 - Consult medical providers



Little / No Progress after Interventions:

- Teacher contact CARE Coordinator
- Internal review of interventions and parent documentation
- Determine if a formal CARE meeting is appropriate



Formal CARE Meeting:

- All CARE meetings scheduled through CARE Coordinator (NOT teacher or parent initiated)
- Invite parents, teacher(s), and aides
- Parents may invite outside consultants
- Create CARE Agenda



Implement, Monitor, and Adjust the Plan

- Document everything (i.e. communications, interventions, responses/outcomes).
- Changes can only occur after CARE meeting - must be documented
- Monitor - CARE Coordinator (AHOS) will check in regularly and will be available for consultation
- Parents may be asked to find outside resources to support their child, at their own cost, as a condition of their continued enrollment
- CARE Meetings ideally to occur 2 times a year (Fall & Spring)
SPS Parent consent form / conditions on continued enrollment

NEWLY ADMITTED STUDENTS

The admissions committee (Admissions Director, Assistant Head of School, Counselor, Learning specialist, and IB Coordinators) will screen all students carefully prior to admission. On occasion, a student will be admitted who has a current IEP or section 504 plan; however, unlike public schools, Seven Peaks is not held to the legally binding portions of an IEP or section 504 plans. When such a child is admitted, a CARE meeting will be established prior to the student's first day of class or at the beginning of the school year. Oftentimes Pre-K and K students have no school history or psychometric testing by which to guide admissions and in such cases, our CARE referral process will guide our evaluation.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Records of students' health, academic performance and/or behavior is governed by Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). These records are highly confidential and will remain private. This confidentiality extends to discussions and all paperwork or electronic data that applies to student progress or health.

COMMUNICATION OF THE SPS/INCLUSION POLICY TO THE SPS COMMUNITY

The Access and Inclusion Policy is shared with staff, families, and students in a variety of ways. The policy is available on our website in written English form. Staff members learn about the Access and Inclusion Policy during specific, collaborative times set aside for policy study.

DOCUMENT REVIEW PROCESS

A committee will be formed every three years to review the Inclusion/Special needs Policy. The committee will be made up of Administration, IB Coordinators, Learning Specialists, CARE coordinators and the school counselor. The purpose of the committee will be to review the current document, revise as needed, plan how to communicate current practices to staff and community, and to provide continued support to meet the needs of all of our learners. If needs arise in the years between formal reviews, a committee can be formed to make amendments to the policy.

Reviewed:

2017-2018

2021-2022

2022-2023

For further information about the IB and its programmes visit <http://www.ibo.org>.

REFERENCES

Heacox, Diane. *Making Differentiation a Habit: How to Ensure Success in Academically Diverse Classrooms*. Free Spirit Publishing, 2017.

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