



Inclusion Policy

2023-2024

Eagle Valley Elementary ~ an IB World School

Introduction

Students come to Eagle Valley Elementary School (EVES) with various backgrounds, interests, abilities, and life experiences. Our student body's diversity is much appreciated and contributes to our school climate and culture. This Inclusion Policy outlines our philosophy and practices for promoting an inclusive school environment.

Mission

At Eagle Valley Elementary IB World School, we strive to develop young people who create a more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

Philosophy

In an IB Primary Years Programme, the term 'inclusion' refers to a mindset and the structures and strategies that IB educators use to increase access and engagement for all students. This policy highlights for all stakeholders (students, parents, teachers, and administrators) how our philosophy and practices provide equitable access to the Primary Years Programme (PYP) curriculum for all students.

This inclusion policy will:

- define inclusion in the EVES setting
- describe Eagle Valley Elementary's strengths-based approach to meeting the needs of all students
- give examples of the physical elements of our school that promote a collaborative and inclusive learning environment
- describe the structures and practices in place to support the whole child
- identify barriers to inclusion and the actions to address them

Inclusion

The International Baccalaureate defines inclusion as “an ongoing process that aims to increase access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers” (Learning Diversity and Inclusion in IB Programmes, 2020).

Inclusion in the Eagle Valley Elementary School setting is defined as providing equal access to opportunities and resources for all. EVES provides this inclusive environment in a variety of ways outlined below:

Meeting Students Needs by Using Strengths

“Although it seems more natural to identify areas of weakness, research has shown that focusing on strengths produces greater enjoyment and engagement at school and higher levels of academic achievement. Students learn, over time, that their strengths can help them manage challenges and build self-esteem and agency” (Waters, 2018).

Eagle Valley has identified the following principles of good practice essential to developing a strength-based approach to learning.

1. **Affirming identity and building self-esteem** is achieved by:
 - a. promoting a class and school environment that welcomes and embraces all learners;
 - b. valuing and using the diversity of cultural perspectives to enhance learning;
 - c. developing and respecting each individual's language profile;
 - d. liaising with parents to establish an understanding of how best to collaborate to achieve shared goals; and
 - e. building knowledge, and demonstrating the Learner Profile.

2. **Valuing prior knowledge** is achieved by:
 - a. sharing knowledge and experiences prior to the introduction of new material and expecting proportional growth as a result of instruction; and
 - b. relating students' prior knowledge and experiences to relevant and engaging real-life situations/issues/events throughout the learning process.

3. **Scaffolding** is achieved by:
 - a. employing a gradual release model of instruction, which increases student independence throughout the learning process;
 - b. differentiating the content, process, or products of learning based on

- individual learning styles; and
 - c. extending learning opportunities based on readiness.
4. **Evaluating Learning** is achieved by:
- a. providing multimodal assessments that align with students' strengths; and
 - b. using equitable grading practices.

Physical Environment & School Culture

Physical Environment

Eagle Valley Elementary stakeholders (students, staff, parents, and administrators) played an active role in designing our school building and grounds, which opened in September 2018. Our active participation ensured that our campus would meet the needs of our students and enhance the collaborative and dual-language setting of our IB Primary Years Programme. Here are just a few of the elements incorporated into the design of our school that function to establish and maintain inclusive communities:

- Clean, minimally furnished classrooms have flexible seating options to support student agency and comfort.
- Connected rooms with wide doorways allow teachers and students to move from one space to another for collaboration.
- Designated glass front collaboration rooms allow students to work in a quiet space.
- Glass garage doors open into an "Exhibition Hall" that connects the maker space and creative arts room to outdoor learning spaces, allowing collaboration among students, teachers, and parents.
- Learning stairs provide an alternative area for small groups, whole classes, or grade-level grouping.
- Outdoor classroom spaces can be used for creative arts and academics.
- A multi-purpose room that opens to the gym for assemblies and performances offers space for collaboration among larger groups of students, teachers, and parents.
- A playground was designed and built with a grant from GOCO (Great Outdoors Colorado). Students participated in the design process and helped choose our new features.
- Large Media Center with sliding doors that open to the Maker Space, for large group collaboration.

School Culture

- Our Mission Statement is painted in English and Spanish on the wall in the Exhibition Hall.
- The Programme of Inquiry is posted in the hallway in Spanish and English for reflection.
- Eagles in Action program is in place. Students can propose actions with adult support.

- Staff training with whole-staff participation includes the following barrier-removing topics: Approaches to Learning skills, Approaches to Teaching skills, Inclusion, Equity, and Wellness.
- Collaborative professional development allows for voice and choice of teacher needs.
- Wondrous Wednesday Specials support the IB Programme and create intercultural understanding.
- Eye on Eagles program allows for demonstration of the Learner Profiles in action.
- Student Leadership programs promote student agency (ambassadors, green team, junior green team, Jr. Hope Squad, and Pledge of Allegiance in both languages and In Lak'Ech call and response poem on Mondays).
- Afterschool interest clubs allow for voice and choice.
- Book Talks and 'Night of a Thousand Stars' encourage parent involvement.
- Bilingual Family Game Night supports education and collaboration.
- Inquiry strengthens curiosity, reflection, and a growth mindset.
- Global Goals Awareness Week and ongoing events inspire global awareness.
- All teachers/students develop culture/language profiles, boosting cultural awareness.
- The IB Themes organize the media center to support the themes recognized by IB.
- School and community involvement in the fifth-grade Exhibition underlines the importance of the IB program.
- Reading Tuesdays builds the foundation of reading for pleasure.

Support Structures and Practices

Differentiation

As noted in *'Learning Diversity in the International Baccalaureate Programmes: Special educational needs within the International Baccalaureate programmes'*, "Differentiation is the process of identifying, with each learner, the most effective strategies for achieving agreed goals" (2010).

At Eagle Valley Elementary, we see differentiation as a long-term whole-school strategy that:

- transforms teaching and learning habits to meet the needs of all learners;
- develops classroom relationships and expectations;
- addresses suitable patterns of assessment that reflect the shift in thinking; and
- provides equitable learning opportunities.

The curriculum should also reflect this philosophy. A good curriculum must be coherent, relevant, stimulating, and challenging, and all tasks should respect students as diverse learners (Culture 1: The school secures access to an IB education for the broadest possible range of students, 0301-01).

Grouping and Regrouping

Various and flexible groupings provide the opportunity for agency and differentiation. Grouping and regrouping students according to dynamic criteria is necessary for creating an inclusive school culture. As students experience a variety of groups, they are encouraged to reflect on their own and others' strengths and abilities. Students are then encouraged to set goals and apply their strengths to learning in other areas. Over time, students learn that their strengths and skills can help them manage areas of challenge. Taking this perspective to learning helps build self-esteem and agency while reducing students' natural tendencies to compare themselves to others.

When grouping and regrouping, teachers and students:

- work collaboratively to consider the intent of the task and the grouping that would be most effective;
- work together to create criteria for success for all work;
- use flexibility and fluidity for grouping depending on each student's needs and
- utilize an intervention team for math and literacy in English and Spanish for all grades.

Some ways to group students are:

- interest
- levels of prior knowledge
- demonstrated strengths or abilities
- content knowledge
- learning process
- type of learning product
- friendships or student choice

Making Learning Accessible With Tiered Support Structures

Tier 1: Classroom Instruction includes whole-group instruction, assessment/screening, and small-group interventions. Within Tier 1, all students receive high-quality, research-based instruction. All learners are assessed to establish baselines and identify academic and social-emotional / behavioral learning needs.

Tier 2: Strategic Interventions serve learners who need more than Tier 1 instruction and who need to receive increasingly intensive support matched to their needs. The Student Support Team designs targeted interventions and progress monitoring tools to evaluate growth. Tier 2 interventions are provided by the general education teacher, with support from interventionists when needed. Goals are developed for all children who are behind or above age/grade-level expectations. (Not all kids above grade level have goals/ALP's)

Learners performing at an advanced level in classroom assessments (1-2 grade levels above) or who demonstrate rapid language acquisition or advanced reasoning receive

small group and skill-specific interventions provided by the classroom teacher with support from the Gifted and Talented Specialist.

Participation in Tier 2 interventions may initiate the compilation of a Body of Evidence used for an eligibility referral for either gifted identification or special education services and access to Tier 3 interventions.

Tier 3: Intensive Interventions are a more intensive form of support intended to address the needs of students experiencing significant problems and needing to be more responsive to Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions. If a student does not show adequate growth after several intervention cycles over time, they are referred for a special education evaluation. Depending on the student's needs and concerns, an evaluation may include cognitive and academic testing, speech, behavior, and physical/motor.

Students who qualify for special education services receive daily or weekly support from the school special education team. The Special Education Teacher, Student Support Specialists, and Special Service Providers address Students' academic needs with research-based interventions/strategies in reading, writing, math, and behavior. The Special Education staff collaborates with classroom teachers to provide accommodations in the classroom so a student can access the PYP Curriculum. Depending on the student's needs, they may need to meet with the special educator outside the classroom.

Tier 3 can also be used to create an Advanced Learning Plan (ALP) for advanced learners formally identified as gifted and talented through testing and building a body of evidence. It provides additional support and modified instruction to meet their needs. Interventions include support with independent or small group inquiries and coaching on student development of transdisciplinary skills and learner attributes. The Gifted and Talented Teacher supports students with their learning goals from the ALP as applied in the classroom.

Addressing the Barriers to Inclusion/Action Plan

Acknowledging the above-listed barriers to inclusivity, the school staff and community participate in reflective planning and professional development aimed at barrier removal. In addition, we execute both an action plan and programme development plan, which work together to address issues before or as they arise.

Collaborative Planning and Professional Development

According to *Learning Diversity in the International Baccalaureate Programmes: Special educational needs within the International Baccalaureate programmes*, "Inclusion is an ongoing process that aims to increase access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers. This can only be successfully achieved in a culture of

collaboration, mutual respect, support, and problem-solving. Inclusion is the learner profile in action, an outcome of dynamic learning communities" (2010).

To ensure that all students have equal access to the curriculum and are successful, we recognize the need to be purposeful in our planning for instruction. At EVES, weekly collaborative planning and professional development sessions provide opportunities for staff to:

- use the 'data teams' process to analyze student work and plan the next steps for learning;
- engage in teacher-led professional development activities that build staff skills and knowledge;
- differentiate the content, process, and products of student learning;
- incorporate technologies, instructional strategies, and resources that may help to alleviate learning challenges;
- consult with specialists and support teachers and determine what support will be provided within and outside the grade level classroom;
- connect on wellness strategies and
- plan for the funding for IB, including how to support the program through school fundraisers, the general school budget, and PTA support.

Action Plan Format

If we are not adhering to this policy, the action plan below is designed to help us reflect and revise.

Objective	Actions and persons responsible	Evidence of achievement or progress toward achievement	Date to be achieved	Budget implications

Programme Development plan format

If inclusion and accessibility become a deeper focus of the school, the Programme Development Plan (below) will be utilized.

Briefly summarize the reasons the school selected this focus for programme development.				
Planning		Reflection		
	Guiding questions and prompts	School response	Guiding questions and prompts	School response
		Completed at the start of the programme development planning		Completed at the conclusion of the programme development activities
IB practices <i>Must fit with at least two categories. Must have at least 2 PS&P for each question.</i>	<p>Identify one or two practices to answer each question. Select practices from at least two categories of the PSP framework.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What practice or practices need to be in place for this development to be successful? • What practice or practices identify the people who are responsible for the work? For example, teachers, leadership, students? • What practice or practices show how the work will be done? That is, what actions will be taken? • What practice or practices indicate why the school is undertaking the work? That is, what is the reason for this focus? 		Indicate if there were any changes to the practices selected and explain why different practices were selected.	
Impact	What will change for students? (Identify the target: all students or subsets of students.)			
Data and Evidence	How will you learn what the impact of the work is? (What data or evidence will be gathered?)			
(Optional) Research and/or shared practice	<p>What examples or research will inform the approach or activities?</p> <p>What examples shared from other schools might inform the school's approach or activities? How might research (published or unpublished) inform the school's approach or activities?</p>			

Ongoing Review Process of the Inclusion Policy:

Steps used to create this policy:

1. Review of IB Documentation related to Inclusion:
 - a. Access and Inclusion (2021)
 - b. The Learning Community (2020)
 - c. The Guide To Inclusive Education (2019)
 - d. Meeting Student Learning Diversity in the Classroom (2019)

- e. IB Programme Standards and Practices (2020)
 - f. Language in the PYP (2018)
 - g. Technology in the PYP (2019)
2. Steering Committee Members 2024:
 - a. Michelle Miller - Head of School
 - b. Anita Ortiz - PYPC
 - c. Amy Hanley- 4th grade English Teacher and IBLT member
 - d. Karen Gonzalez- Kindergarten Spanish teacher
 - e. Lindsey Gross- Media/STEM Specialist and IBLT memeber
 3. Review of student policy survey results (2023)
 4. Completing of Staff reflection document to support the discussion of current policies
 5. Revise the Inclusion Policy

This policy will be formally reviewed yearly by EVES staff and revised as needed to adapt to changing best practices and the needs of our learning community.

Revision Committee- 2024

- Michele Miller -Head of School
- Anita Ortiz- PYPC
- Amy Hanley- 4th Grade English Teacher IBLT member
- Lindsey Gross- Media Specialist - IBLT member
- Karen Gonzalez- Kindergarten Spanish Teacher and IBLT member
- Lindsay Jones- Kindergarten Teacher
- Krista Boni- 4th grade Bilingual Teacher
- Andrea Starks-Corbin Parent
- Tenley Stoltzfus- 5th grade Student
- Dylan Caraveo- 5th grade Student

The annually reviewed inclusion policy will be communicated through a posting on the EVES website (<https://eves.eagleschools.net/>), and a tri-fold brochure will be available in the office and distributed to all families new to EVES.

