

Inclusion Policy

Shaker Heights City PYP Schools

[Link to MYP Inclusion Policy](#)

[Link to DP Inclusion Policy](#)



Alignment with the school's mission statement

The Mission of International Baccalaureate is: *The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment. These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.*

The mission of Shaker Schools is: *The District will nurture, educate, and graduate students who are civic-minded and prepared to make ethical decisions; who are confident, competent communicators, skillful in problem solving, capable of creative thinking; who have a career motivation and a knowledge of our global and multicultural society.*

Both of these imply all students, every single one.

Shaker's core values are: *Each student is valued. Every student must succeed. Diversity makes us stronger. Breadth of experience is vital. Fiscal responsibility is essential. We are all accountable.*

These values are firmly and universally held by all stakeholders of the District. Evidence of this culture is seen in classrooms, community outreach and involvement, extensive support for students, budgeting and hiring decisions, creation and work of solution-oriented task forces, regular analysis of data and trends, and most importantly, with, to and for every student.

Specifically, our Pupil Services and Special Education department focuses on implementing the district's mission by nurturing, educating, and graduating students with disabilities. The District has high expectations for all children, and in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), ensures access to the general education curriculum in regular education classrooms, to the maximum extent possible to meet each child's needs.

Learner Profile and International-mindedness

We believe the International Baccalaureate Program, adopted by the District at all grade levels, stresses the importance of embracing diversity and inclusion and provides endless opportunities for all students to become independent thinkers, inquirers, and communicators. We believe that, with necessary accommodations and support, every child will gain knowledge, understand

universal concepts, and build and strengthen his/her research, thinking, social, communication and self-management skills. Each student can and will demonstrate learner profile attributes to become active, compassionate lifelong learners capable in a local and global context.

Legal requirements and obligations; Rights and Responsibilities

The Special Education Needs Policy is district-driven and in accordance with applicable state and federal law. Here are links to [State](#) and [Federal](#) laws. In addition, this policy needs to be known and adopted in each PYP school; teachers must act in accordance with the policy; the policy needs to be used to inform decision-making; the policy needs to be communicated to the community.

District's structures and processes for compliance to legal requirements and obligations

We value the team decision-making process in regard to intervention, special education identification and the provision of support services. Some students require more specific interventions, as determined by the Intervention Assistance Team (IAT) in the Response to Intervention (RtI) process. In accordance with law, appropriate policies and procedures are followed to a) garner parent(s)/guardian(s) consent, b) determine student needs and c) provide the required individualized student support services. Each student with identified special needs is provided with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan that has been developed by the special education team, in collaboration with parent(s)/guardian(s). Each IEP includes a vision statement and intended areas of academic and social growth. Each 504 Plan contains accommodations, which ensure student access to the curriculum.

District statement regarding confidentiality

As per IDEA, "All information gathered or referenced in any part of these processes is confidential and will not be shared in any context to any person unless relevant to development or implementation of a student's learning plan. IDEA and other federal laws protect the confidentiality of student education records. These safeguards address the following three aspects:

- the use of personally identifiable information;
- who may have access to student records; and
- the rights of parents to inspect their child's education records and request that these be amended to correct information that is misleading or inaccurate, or that violates the child's privacy or other rights."

Local, national and international legal requirements of teachers in meeting the needs of students; decision-making and curriculum development

This policy, adopted by the District's five Primary Years Programme schools, will be used in collaboration with State and Federal laws to provide appropriate services to students with disabilities within the least restrictive environment with accommodations and modification, as needed.

All students are part of the PYP in our district; all adults charged with developing and/or implementing each student's educational plan will include learning objectives centered around gaining knowledge, using conceptual thinking, building learner profile attributes, developing Approaches to Learning, exercising agency, taking action to the best of that student's ability. Additionally, IB transdisciplinary curriculum, including assessments, will provide multiple means of representation and expression as well as multiple access points in order to assure success for all learners.

What constitutes good practice

Teachers assess and analyze data to determine where each student is along the continuum of learning. The District has myriad tools and procedures for data procurement and analysis. The District continually grows and develops specialized learning environments and units to meet the needs of all 13 categories of disabilities as outlined in IDEA.

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By creating specially designed instruction and incorporating individualized learning materials and objectives based on student data, teachers maximize and measure growth in all students. This level of individualized attention allows for the inclusion of all students in mainstream classes when it specifically addresses the needs of each student.

Preferably, special education services are provided within the Tier1 general education setting through co-teaching experiences with intervention specialists in order to be more inclusive of targeted students as well as enhance educational support of general education students. Students are supported in general education classes by members of the special education team (including intervention specialists, paraprofessionals, other related service providers) who collaborate with general education teachers to plan and differentiate instruction. Through collaboration, the special education team and classroom teachers address student needs ensuring that each lesson is designed with access for all students. A list of possible supports includes, but is not limited to: individualized scaffolding, preferred seating, transcription, additional time on assignments and/or other supports. Each of these supports ensures that all students are successful in meeting the learning objectives.

MTSS (Multi-tiered Systems of Support) requires schools to have a strong Tier 1 program so that the number of Tier 2 and Tier 3 experiences and interventions are more limited and specific to those who require it. Data is used to add or release levels of student support.

Professional development to support good practice (See Section 1462 of IDEA)

As outlined in Section 1462 of IDEA, the district will provide "professional learning to improve services and results for children with disabilities. This includes professional learning for all personnel so that each will have the necessary skills and knowledge, derived from practices that have been determined, through scientifically based research, to be successful in serving those children. This personnel development, includes activities for the preparation of personnel who will serve children with high incidence and low incidence disabilities, to prepare special education and general education teachers, principals, administrators, and related services personnel (and school board members, when appropriate) to meet the diverse and individualized instructional needs of children with disabilities and improve early intervention, educational, and transitional services and results for children with disabilities." This personnel is, but not limited to: central office administrators, building principals/assistant principals, school psychologists, classroom teachers, special education intervention specialists and tutors, related services personnel, paraprofessionals, single subject teachers and support staff. This professional development will be through an accredited/approved agency and implemented as needed. The Director of Pupil Services will monitor and implement a professional learning plan that best serves this District to ensure that all relevant personnel have concurrent understanding of laws and their implications.

Relevant support materials and resources

- The most important **Written Resources** for the Inclusion policy are, but not limited to:
 - [From Principles to Practice: Learning and Teaching](#)
 - [From Principles to Practice: The Learner](#)
 - [From Principles to Practice: The Learning Community](#)
 - [IB Access and Inclusion Policy](#)
 - [IB Standards and Practices](#)
 - [Guide to Programme Evaluation](#)
 - [Shaker Heights City Schools Student Handbook](#)
 - [School Board policies](#)
 - Differentiated learning materials
 - [IB section on website](#)
 - [PYP section on website](#)
 - IB Online materials as accessed through [My IB](#) and Programme Resource Center
 - All training documents/virtual resources attained in IB training
 - Language, Assessment, Access policies
 - [IDEA](#) which mandates that all students have access to public education
 - [Ohio Department of Education policies and practices](#).
- Shaker Heights City School District is committed to the success of all students, thus has dedicated personnel to guarantee inclusion. These **Human Resources** include, but are

not limited to:

- [Pupil services](#) and Special Education department, which includes staff: director and primary supervisor
- Intervention Specialist and tutors
- English Language Learning teachers
- Literacy Specialists
- Paraprofessionals
- School psychologists
- Guidance Counselors
- Social Workers
- FACE Coordinators
- Contracted Behavioral Coaches
- Speech language therapists
- Physical and occupational therapy practitioners
- Personnel assisting with transition services
- Special transportation providers
- Those human resources are furthered by crucial **Community Resources**
 - If a physician certifies that a student is medically unable to attend school for a period of time, the District would provide home instruction for the student.
 - There are also some students with disabilities who are out of school for disciplinary reasons and whose IEP teams decide home instruction is the appropriate interim alternative educational placement during the suspension or expulsion. The home instruction would be provided either by a District teacher (likely to follow IB principles) or through a local tutoring agency, North Coast Tutoring (may or may not use IB).
 - The district does have some special education students who are served via IEP team decision at separate facility placements, none of which include IB in their educational programs. Some of the separate facility schools the District works with are: The Gerson School, schools within the Positive Education Program (PEP) network, The Lerner School, Kidslink, Monarch School, and LEAP school.
- **Non-human resources** are evidenced by the budgeted amounts in the District's Financial Plan.
- **Physical spaces** for learning, including but not limited to intervention rooms, ELL rooms, KRP rooms, psychologists and counseling rooms, conferencing areas and collaborative planning spaces. Each of these spaces has a different function; those directly connected to student learning are adapted, as needed, to ensure access to the curriculum to the maximum extent possible to meet each child's needs.
- **Virtual spaces** include online learning platforms to ensure differentiation: examples include but are not limited to Dreambox, Duolingo, Waterford, etc.

Alignment and links to other school policies

[Access Policy](#)

The Access to Programme Policy and Inclusion Policy work hand in hand. All students who are

enrolled and attending Shaker's Elementary Schools have access to the Primary Years Programme. All who are in the programme are included in the least restrictive environment for learning.

Language Policy

The Language Policy, acknowledging that language is a modality to provide instruction and maximize learning, is deeply connected to the Inclusion Policy. Language instruction is differentiated to meet the needs of all learners. Reading materials, real and virtual, are differentiated for our students. Students who are identified as needing support from a Speech Therapist will have those supports and accommodations built into their IEPs or 504 plans. English Language Learners (ELL) receive services through the ELL Program. The program provides services based on students' individual language needs while simultaneously supporting the content learning in all classes. Our language program (including Home and Second Language) promotes international-mindedness in the school setting by affirming cultural diversity and cultural awareness, encourages open and respectful attitudes towards others and other cultures and promotes additive bilingualism and biculturalism, a goal of international education.

Assessment Policy

The Assessment Policy, acknowledging that data is crucial to understanding students and individualizing their academic program, is deeply connected to the Inclusion Policy. Teachers use assessment for a variety of purposes including: gaining understanding of students' thinking and processing, diagnosing student needs, checking for mastery of skills and concepts, guiding instruction, differentiating instruction, reflecting on the effectiveness of their teaching, providing opportunities for reciprocal feedback, and developing a student's sense of self-efficacy. Each of these purposes for assessment are seen through the lens of inclusion, such that each student can show thinking in ways adapted to his/her needs and abilities. Teacher Based Teams meet regularly to design and implement appropriate assessments and review student data to plan appropriate instruction to meet varying student needs.

When benchmark assessments and progress monitoring data indicate the need for further assessment, a multi-factored evaluation including a Standardized Achievement and a Standardized Ability measure may be administered as part of the RtI and IAT process.

Academic Integrity Policy

The Academic Integrity Policy, acknowledging that knowledge can be attained in a variety of ways, is connected to the Inclusion Policy. Each year, teachers lead discussions and model how and when to convert information to original text. Teachers use developmentally appropriate strategies and expectations to support student understanding of the importance of intellectual property. A scope and sequence is provided in the policy that allows all students to be successful in developing original thoughts.

Technology for Inclusion

Technology is a way to ensure that every student can maximize his/her ability to show what they know. The District believes that all students should have access to technology tools regardless of home accessibility. Every K-4 student has a device; K and 1 students have Touchpads and students in 2-4 have Chromebooks. The District has made available a variety of tech tools and apps to support learning in all modes for all students. Technology integration also provides for differentiation within the classroom and for homework. As needed, required and requested, the District provides tools, processes and apps to increase accessibility.

Review and revision cycle

The District will monitor and evaluate the impact of the Inclusion Policy to ensure that it regularly informs learning and teaching. The Inclusion Policy will be continually cross-referenced with other working documents such as our state standards, IB standards and practices, other policies and relevant documents.

Documentation and storage of this policy will be the responsibility of the IB district coordinator and PYP liaison. Policies will be shared, and revised as necessary, with District and Building Leadership Teams, then located on the district IB website for community access. Bi-annually, district coordinators will capture and use compliance data about this (and all other) policies through surveys to key stakeholders. Bi-annually, and during self-study years, coordinators will review, revise and readopt policy documents.

Communication plan

Communication between classroom teachers, parent(s)/guardian(s), and the IAT/RtI/special education team is ongoing and includes both face to face meetings as well as IEP Progress Reports, Observation Forms, and annual review meetings. Supports and resources for parents are detailed online and in hard copy, including the IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) document and at Shaker.org under Parents & Students, Pupil Services, Resources. By request or need, documents will be translated into the student's home language for parents, including providing interpreters for conferences and IEPs. Policies will be shared and revised by District and Building Leadership Teams, and then communicated on IB website and individual school websites.