



# DOUGLAS COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL

## IB FEEDER INCLUSION POLICY

### Guiding Principles & Philosophy

All IB schools have a statutory responsibility to provide an inclusive, broad and balanced curriculum for all students regardless of disability. The Special Education needs policy places great emphasis on the responsibilities of the classroom teacher to be aware of and make provision for students with special education needs and the rights of students and parents to be fully informed of that provision. The local/national requirements of teachers in meeting the needs of all students with disabilities are based on the provision of Individual with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act of 2004 and Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, amended in 2008. Each school offers a needs based program that evolves and changes to meet the unique needs of our students and aligns with federal and state guidelines and regulations.

Staff at all schools fully understand their role and responsibility in creating a learning environment where all students are able to succeed, regardless of ability level. We believe in supporting students in finding their personal strengths in order to support growth in their learning. It is our job as educators to ensure that all students are provided access to a reasonable education while ensuring confidentiality. We believe that students with special needs should be placed within the least restrictive environment, and whenever possible, they should be with their general education peers in the classroom. Overall, as a feeder, our schools strive to create a community of learners where all students feel valued and where all students feel like they can thrive as learners.

### Accessibility and IB

Our feeder schools implement inclusive practices based on the needs of all students. All students fully participate in the IB program, as appropriate, based on their least restrictive environment (LRE). Furthermore, general and special education teachers collaborate regularly when developing unit planners in order to ensure access to all students beginning with the end in mind.

**IEP Plans:** The Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is federally mandated for students with disabilities and meets the eligibility criteria for special education services. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEIA) ensures that students with disabilities who require specialized instruction receive such instruction in the public school in the least restrictive environment. Under Colorado law, the Colorado Rules for the Exceptional Children's Education Act (ECEA), students attending Colorado public schools are also entitled to a free and appropriate public education. Students ages 3-21 may be eligible for an IEP under the following categories: Specific Learning Disability (SLD), Physical Disability, Autism, Multiple Disabilities, Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), Speech Language Impairment, Significant Support Needs, Intellectual Capacity, Significant Emotional Disability (SED), and Preschool Disability through Child Find services.

**504 Plans:** Each 504 plan provides accommodations for a student with a disability who does not have an IEP. At Mesa, we have detailed and effective planners and curriculum, however, some students need accommodations in place to help them access this information. Accommodations are set up in a way to encourage independence for our students, as they are taught to be reflective about their learning style and communicate their needs to their teachers. Students on a 504 participate in all areas of the IB program

however, accommodations are given in order to help them access the curriculum.

**Differentiation:** Our feeder schools strive to address the needs of every student in a variety of ways. Personalized learning and pathways offer students the chance to take control over their learning process and educational experience.

**Advanced Learning Plans:** The Advanced Learning Plan (ALP) is a state-mandated individual document developed for each student who is identified as Gifted and Talented (GT) by state guidelines. Students may be identified in a specific area (Reading, Writing, Math, Science, or Social Studies), general intellectual ability (all academic areas), cognitive ability, visual arts, performing arts, creativity, and/or leadership. ALPs are strength based documents, developed and revised annually, to provide challenges in the student's given area(s) of strength. These documents include specific goals in the area of affective guidance and counseling as well as goals for parents. Also included are accommodations teachers are asked to make to help identified students be as successful as possible.

## Tiered Programming and Services Offered

A variety of services exist in order to meet the needs of students on an IEP. Students are assigned a case manager who works with teams in order to ensure the IEP needs are being addressed. All self-contained classes are taught by certified learning specialists. Services we provide are as follows:

- **Dimensions in Literacy (Mesa)/Exploring Literature (DCHS):** These intervention classes are for students on READ plans to address and progress-monitor academic deficits for reading and writing while assessing appropriate IB criterion.
- **Dimensions of Math (Mesa):** Students access this class for a period of time so that they can gain skills to help them in their math classes. This intervention is in place for however long the student needs it, based on a body of evidence.
- **Multi-Tiered Support System:** Schools use the Multi-Tiered Support System model to identify and meet the needs of all learners. Research-based interventions and progress-monitoring are utilized to address individual student needs and determine next steps.
- **General education with minimum support** - Students on an IEP are in the general education classroom with the learning specialist consulting with the general education teacher on the best way for the student to access the curriculum.
- **Team Taught classes** - These classrooms contain both a general education teacher and a learning specialist. The teachers work together to design IB units that address and allow access to the curriculum as well as meet the accommodations of the students.
- **Self-contained classes** - Provided by a learning specialist for students on an IEP who require a modified curriculum. These classes address IEP goals while following IB aims and objectives.
- **Affective Needs (AN)** - Provided by a learning specialist for students on an IEP. The goal of the AN program is to provide academic and mental health support for skill-building and educational access in the school setting. Students enrolled in the AN program will be supported in developing skills of self-determination, self-advocacy, and independent functioning in preparation for post-secondary objectives.
- **Significant Support Needs (SSN)** - Taught by Significant Support Need teachers who follow IB guidelines and assess criterion based on modified curriculum. Teachers follow the least restrictive environment guidelines under IDEA when making decisions for students. Whenever possible, students push into regular ed explorer classes, science, and individuals & societies. Math and Language and Literature are taught primarily in self-contained resource classes based on individual student needs.

- **Resource** - An intervention class that focuses on access skills relating to IB units.
- **Project Unify** - Internationally based program that exemplifies all IB traits and fosters inclusion for all students.
- **Speech-Language Services** - Provided by a speech-language pathologist to address IEP needs of the student, typically centered around specific Language A criterion.
- **Mental Health Services** - Provided by School Social Worker and School Psychologist to address IEP goals and provide access to the social and academic curriculum.
- **Occupational Therapy Services** - Provided by an Occupational Therapist to address IEP needs of students, typically centered around fine motor development, to include sensory integration development.
- **Adaptive Physical Education** teaches the Physical and Health Education curriculum at Mesa Middle School but provides adaptations and modifications for students on an as-needed basis. These adaptations address physical limitations and/or adaptations to classroom assignments. Peer helpers work with the SSN students to ensure proper social interactions and inclusion in the lessons.

**Review:**

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or as laws governing Special Education change.