

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE INCLUSION POLICY



This comprehensive policy contains aspects which apply to the North and Palmer Middle Years program as well as to the Palmer Diploma and Career-Related program. Please note commonalities as well as relevant distinctions.



Philosophy and Purpose

In all IB programmes, teaching is ... designed to remove barriers to learning. Teaching is inclusive and values diversity. It affirms students' identities, and aims to create learning opportunities that enable every student to develop and pursue appropriate personal goals.

(What is an IB education? 2013:6)

In alignment with the mission of School District 11—to dare to empower the whole student to profoundly impact our world—we are committed to ensuring that each student is equipped to adapt creatively to evolving challenges, actively pursue meaningful learning, and continuously grow toward their personal best. We aim to cultivate students' personal, social, and cultural competencies and support them in applying these intentionally in their lives.

Aligned with our district's vision—a dynamic, collaborative community of energized educators, engaged students, and supportive partners committed to continuous learning—the faculties of Palmer High School and North Middle School affirm the right of all students to access high-quality IB education. This includes IB Middle Years Programme (MYP) learners, IB Diploma Programme (DP) course candidates, and Career-related Programme (CP) students. We are committed to providing inclusive, inquiry-based learning environments where every student—including those who require additional support—can demonstrate their abilities, engage in rigorous academic challenges, and reach their fullest personal potential.

To ensure equitable access and reduce barriers to learning, we foster a dynamic learning community grounded in collaboration, mutual respect, and shared problem-solving. We intentionally build partnerships among teachers, students, parents/guardians, special education staff, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education (CLDE) staff, school counselors, and other building specialists. Together, we work to create learning environments that meet each student's individual needs, including those outlined in least restrictive environment (LRE) guidelines. We also promote collaboration across teaching teams to enhance student learning through



interdisciplinary activities and projects. This policy will be reviewed every five years as part of the IB self-study process.

The IB defines inclusion as ***"the ongoing process that seeks to increase access and engagement to learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers. Inclusion is an organization paradigm that involves change. It is a continual process of increasing learning and participation for all students. It addresses learning support requirements and questions the broader objectives of education, the nature of pedagogy, curriculum and assessment. It is an educational approach to which all schools should aspire. Inclusion is facilitated in a culture of collaboration, mutual respect, support and problem solving including the whole school community."*** (Learning and Diversity in IB Programmes, 2016).

We recognize that inclusive education requires a deliberate and strategic shift in both administrative and educator mindsets. To support this transformation, we prioritize long-term, coherent planning and sustained professional learning that deepens understanding of learner variability, challenges deficit-based assumptions, and equips staff with the mindset, skills, and strategies—grounded in the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL)—to proactively design inclusive, student-centered learning environments.

We intentionally integrate the frameworks of UDL and Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) as essential tools for ensuring access and equity. UDL guides us in creating flexible learning environments that accommodate diverse needs from the outset, while MTSS provides a structured, tiered approach to delivering targeted academic, behavioral, and social-emotional interventions based on individual student data.

In alignment with the IB's commitment to inclusive education, we also prioritize the removal of **physical and environmental barriers** that may inhibit student participation and learning. This includes ensuring that all students have **physical access** to learning environments through accommodations such as **elevator access**, as well as **hearing and vision support services** when needed. We work to ensure that classroom spaces are not only accessible but welcoming, with **adaptive materials, assistive technologies**, and **clear signage and routines** that support all learners. Just as important is our commitment to the **transparent communication of student needs and accommodations**—ensuring that students, families, and teachers are fully informed and equipped to implement support plans effectively. By embedding these practices into our inclusive culture, we uphold the IB values of **respect, dignity, and equity**, ensuring that all students can participate meaningfully in every aspect of school life.

Looking ahead, we are committed to embedding data-driven instruction (DDI) and continuous progress monitoring as foundational elements of our inclusive teaching strategy. By systematically collecting and analyzing formative, summative, and behavioral data within the MTSS framework, we can make timely, informed decisions that anticipate and respond to student needs, reduce barriers to access, and ensure equitable learning outcomes for all.

Structure and Process Used to Comply with Legal Requirements

Students receive learning support through a wide variety of interventions. Within the classroom, Best Tier 1 Instruction is embedded throughout the lesson in observance with the following four

principles of best practices:

- A. Affirming identity and building self-esteem
- B. Valuing prior knowledge
- C. Scaffolding instruction
- D. Extending learning for students ready for enrichment

In addition, to align with our District's Equity statement, Colorado Springs School District 11 is committed to inclusion and is committed to providing an ecosystem of inclusive practices to meet the unique needs of all, the following list outlines layers of intervention in place, outside the classroom, to support student learning and success for all students:



1. A culture of behavioral accountability based on restorative practices
 - a. The use of restorative practices is fundamental to the culture of Palmer High School. The Palmer faculty emphasizes the importance of taking responsibility for one's actions through respectful dialogue as a means for conflict resolution.
 - b. Restorative practices promote honest dialogue, understanding, reparation of harm and inclusion rather than punishment and isolation when conflict occurs.
2. Co-Teaching instructional models in all core areas where there are students with all ability levels are present. This structure provides for IEP service delivery for students with disabilities, within the learning environment, alongside their peers. Two teachers, one curriculum certified and one special education certified, share the planning and delivery of the instruction.
3. To promote student learning in all learning environments, we use a multi-tiered support system (MTSS) to strengthen tier I instruction and access diagnostic tier II assessments for a targeted approach to address individual student challenges.
 - a. At North Middle School (Years 6, 7, and 8)
 - i. During the first three years of the middle school program, teacher teams meet for "Kid Talk" to discuss students as it relates to academic, attendance, social-emotional and/or behavioral issues. Teachers then develop formal or informal plans to support the student. If increased support is needed, then the student may move forward to a multi-tiered support system and/or the Problem-Solving Team.
 - b. At Palmer High School (Years 9, 10, 11, 12)
 - J. To promote student learning in all environments, we implement a robust Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) reinforced by data-driven decision-making at every tier. This framework ensures all students have equitable access to rigorous instruction, with systematic identification of needs and targeted interventions informed by real-time data:
 - Tier 1:** High-quality, differentiated instruction for all students, monitored using universal screeners and formative assessments.
 - Tier 2:** Targeted group interventions triggered by diagnostic data from assessments and "Kid Talk" team reviews at North or Problem-Solving Team analysis at Palmer.

Tier 3: Intensive, individualized interventions based on multiple sources of data (progress monitoring tools, behavioral incident reports, IEP data) for students not responding to Tier 2.

School teams—including general educators, interventionists, counselors, and specialists—meet regularly to triangulate data from multiple domains (academic, social-emotional, behavioral) to adapt interventions accordingly.

- c. At Palmer High School, personalized academic support is offered through dedicated tutoring centers focused on reading and writing, math, and science. These learning interventions are available throughout the school day and after school, providing individual and small-group instruction. Under the strategic leadership of the Tutoring Center Coordinator, support is delivered by peer tutors, instructional paraprofessionals, and community volunteers. These centers are designed to meet the needs of students at all levels and ensure access to high-quality, personalized learning opportunities.
 - d. Before and after school clubs offer both academic support and enrichment opportunities.
 - e. To support the Diploma program, A team of Extended Essay Supervisors, LTE's and the IB Coordinator provide IB Work Days where they consult with students, provide writing assistance for extended essays, support completing college applications, scholarships, homework, etc.
 - f. We recognize that behavior can also interrupt student success academically and socially and therefore have proactive interventions in place that promote positive relations, self-control and self-advocacy in overcoming behavioral problems. A "Behavior Intervention Team" works to ensure that students receive the coaching, structure and redirection needed for successful inclusion in a classroom setting.
 - g. Some students will complete targeted assessments administered by special education teams to identify learning support requirements for individualized learning accommodations and modifications, access arrangements, they may need. These are documented in 504 Plans and Individualized Education Plans (IEP).
 - h. Some students will be evaluated for and gain access arrangements through Advanced Learning Plans (ALP), to ensure success in accelerated classes and academic enrichment opportunities.
4. To promote successful transitions between North Middle School and Palmer High School for students who have 504's, IEP's, and ALP's, collaboration processes between teams are in place to communicate the individual student needs as efficiently as possible. Often special education teachers from both schools attend the transition IEP meeting for individual students to avoid disruption of learning services.

Transition plans between middle and high school incorporate DDI summaries (assessment history, intervention logs, accommodations history) to ensure continuity of services and informed placement in support structures (e.g., co-taught classes, tutoring labs, extended essay support).

5. Students admitted into the IB Diploma Programme or the Career-related Programme with IEP's, 504 plans, and ALP's will have such plans reviewed by the IB Diploma Coordinator and/or the IB Career-Related Program Coordinator in consultation with the IB Counselor. As a result, the IB Diploma Program or IB Career-Related Program Coordinator may contact the IB via IBIS to make a request for inclusive assessment arrangements. As per

IB requirements, “a psychological/psycho-educational document is mandatory for all access requirements necessitated due to specific learning difficulties. A medical document is mandatory for all access requirements necessitated due to medical, or psychological issues. Educational evidence is required for all requests” (IB Information Systems, “Request for Inclusive Assessment Arrangements,” accessed October 8, 2015). Students and/or their parents/guardians must provide the IB Diploma Coordinator with all needed documentation by November 10 in order to process the request by the IB’s stated deadline of November 15 for the May session. Ordinarily, requests made and accepted on behalf of an anticipated candidate (i.e., IB junior) will carry over into the senior year without the need to complete another official request. All decisions regarding granting inclusive assessment arrangements are made by the IB, not Palmer High School staff.

6. Data-Driven Instruction (DDI) to Enhance Inclusion

- Teachers regularly collect and analyze data from formative assessments, classroom observations, and district benchmarks.
- PLCs (Professional Learning Communities) engage in cycles of inquiry, using common assessments to identify trends, adjust instructional strategies, and determine student groupings for interventions or extensions.
- DDI cycles inform MTSS tier placement, ensuring that student needs are proactively addressed and that interventions are data-justified and outcomes-based.

Federal and state legislation governing inclusion:

District 11 schools operate in full compliance with the following federal, state and local requirements in delivering special education services to students who qualify:

- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
 - Outline requirements for educating students with disabilities to include identification, evaluation, funding, discipline, monitoring and enforcement related to the Individual Education Program. <http://idea.ed.gov/>
- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
 - Protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
 - Forbids organizations from excluding or denying individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to receive program benefits and services. It defines the rights of individuals with disabilities to participate in, and have access to, program benefits and services. <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/civilrights/resources/factsheets/504.pdf>
- Exceptional Children’s Educational Act (ECEA)
 - Outlines the rules associated with special education and gifted programming. <http://www.cde.state.co.us/sites/default/files/documents/spedlaw/download/ecearules-march2013.pdf> (11)

Colorado Springs School District 11 Board of Education policies governing inclusion:

- IHBA: Special Education Programs for Students with Educational Disabilities
 - In keeping with the intention of the state of Colorado to offer educational opportunities to all students which will enable them to lead fulfilling and productive lives, Colorado Springs School District 11 (the District) shall provide appropriate educational opportunities to all eligible District students in accordance with the requirements of state and federal law.

- IHBA: Multi-Tiered System of Supports
 - The District's MTSS is our unified, prevention-based framework for advancing academic and behavioral outcomes while cultivating the social and emotional wellness of every student. MTSS guarantees an ecosystem of equitable practices to meet the unique needs of every individual by optimizing a dynamic, collaborative community of energized educators, engaged students, and supportive partners with a passion for continuous learning.

- IHBB: Gifted and Talented Education
 - The Colorado Springs School District 11 Board of Education (the Board) is dedicated to providing comprehensive programming for the identification and education of gifted students. Gifted students are those students between the ages of four and twenty-one whose abilities, talents, and potential for accomplishment are so exceptional or developmentally advanced that they require special provisions to meet their educational programming needs. The Board believes that a quality instructional program that differentiates curriculum and instruction is essential so all students can learn and grow at their level of potential.

Definition of Key Terms

The following glossary provides working definitions of critical terms used in this policy:

- Access arrangements (also referred to as inclusive access arrangements)
 - Access arrangements are changes introduced to teaching, learning and assessment to remove or reduce barriers. They do not change what the student is expected to learn and do not lower expectations, but instead provide the optimal support to address challenges and to enable the student to work around them.

 - At a fundamental level, they address equal access and fairness to learning and teaching and in addition, validity and meaningfulness to assessment.

- Learning support requirements: Support and/or access required to enable some students, who have the aptitude to meet all curriculum and assessment requirements, to reach their full potential in learning and assessment. Not all students who have access requirements will need learning support.
 - Students with identified challenges (such as: autism/Asperger's syndrome; learning challenges; speech, communication, physical and sensory challenges; social,

emotional and behavioral difficulties; medical and mental health challenges) may have learning support requirements. Also, additional language learners may receive learning support to bridge and develop their language. However, learning support is not restricted to students with identified challenges and must be provided to any student who requires support.

- **Dynamic learning community:** all references to school or learning communities include the voices of all learners, their parents/guardians, certified and support staff as well as community members invested in our schools.

- **Accommodations:** Accommodations are practices and procedures that provide equitable access during instruction and assessment for students who have a documented need, including students with a disability, as defined by the Colorado Department of Education.
 - Accommodations may include changes in course content, teaching strategies, test presentation, location, timing, scheduling, student responses, environmental structuring, and/or other attributes which provide access for a student with a disability to participate in a course/standard/test, which **DO NOT fundamentally alter or lower the standard or expectations of the course/standard/test.** (Wright)

- **Modifications:** The student’s IEP team determines the student will receive modified instruction based on alternative academic achievement standards, known as Extended Evidence Outcomes (EEO). The student participates in alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards, as defined by Colorado Department of Education
 - Modifications may include changes in course content, teaching strategies, standards, test presentation, location, timing, scheduling, expectations, student responses, environmental structuring, and/or other attributes which provide access for a student with a disability to participate in a course/standard/test, which **DO fundamentally alter the expectations of the course/standard/test.** (Wright)

Glossary:

- **Data-Driven Instruction (DDI)**
An instructional approach that uses student data to inform teaching practices and curriculum decisions. DDI ensures educators respond to evidence of learning gaps or strengths with timely, targeted adjustments.

- **Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)**
A prevention-based framework integrating academic, behavioral, and social-emotional supports into a coherent system. Each tier is grounded in data and designed to ensure all students receive appropriate support and enrichment.

- **Universal Design for Learning (UDL)**
A research-based framework that guides the design of flexible learning environments and instructional practices to accommodate the diverse needs of all learners. UDL emphasizes proactive planning through multiple means of engagement, representation, and

action/expression to reduce barriers and promote equitable access to learning.

- **Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)**

A principle from special education law stating that students with disabilities should be educated with their non-disabled peers to the greatest extent appropriate. The LRE is determined individually and must provide the supports needed for students to access the general curriculum.

- **Access Arrangements**

Adjustments or accommodations made for students to ensure fair and equitable access to learning and assessment. These may include additional time, assistive technology, modified materials, or alternative formats, and are based on individual learning needs and documented evidence.

Accountability and Review

The Inclusion policy is formally reviewed as part of our IB program’s five-year self-study and evaluation. Substantive changes can occur more frequently as changing demographics or other circumstances warrant.

2025 Language Policy Review Team

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