INCLUSION POLICY

MISSION STATEMENT

Through inquiry and strong relationships, The International School at Mary Mae Jones develops internationally minded learners who pursue excellence, embrace diversity, take meaningful action with integrity, and demonstrate compassion in a global society.

VISION STATEMENT

To ensure high levels of learning for each student.

Philosophy

At The International School at Mary Mae Jones, we recognize inclusive education as a belief system and approach to ensure all learners are accepted and valued for their unique abilities. Education is a human right, and inclusive education ensures that all students have equitable opportunities to learn and grow.

Inclusion is an ongoing process that aims to increase access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers. Inclusive schools foster a sense of belonging and make efforts to include every student in both general education classrooms and extracurricular activities.

Our staff employs diverse approaches and support systems to address individual needs, providing quality learning experiences. Classroom teachers collaborate with support staff within the Primary Years Programme (PYP) to deliver inclusive instruction tailored to meet every student's academic, social, and emotional potential.

Guiding Principles

Beliefs

- Every student should have access to the curriculum within the PYP.
- The International Baccalaureate (IB) framework is incorporated into all classrooms within the building and supported by all personnel.
- Education is built on individual experiences, learning styles, and conceptual understanding.
- Multilingualism is embraced as a fact, a right, and a resource. *Language Policy (TBD).*
- Response to Intervention (RtI) practices such as scaffolding and enrichment opportunities are integral to learning success.
- Diversity, including culture, ethnicity, religion, and socioeconomic status, is valued as a resource for building inclusive communities.

Practices

Meeting Students Where They Are

- Support services are adjusted to meet evolving student needs throughout the year.
- Teachers utilize scaffolding to enable students to accomplish tasks independently.
- Data-driven decision-making ensures targeted instruction and intervention.

Collaborating to Promote Learning

- General education staff collaborate with specialists (special education, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), Gifted/Talented, counselors) during Professional Learning Committee (PLC) meetings, student reviews, and planning sessions.
- Inclusive placement decisions are guided by student needs.
- Regular data analysis supports progress monitoring and growth assessment.

Learning Diversity

- Differentiation strategies include targeted instruction, flexible grouping, and provision of alternative resources.
- Assessments are designed to allow learners to demonstrate understanding through diverse methods.
- Students are given opportunities for choice and alternative presentation modes to support creativity and success.

Community Collaboration

- Parents and families are integral partners, participating through events such as Parent University sessions, conferences, and curriculum nights.
- The school community engages in inclusive practices through mentorship, literacy partnerships, and cultural events. We strive to empower students to develop empathy, respect and appreciation for all learners.
- All stakeholders are encouraged to contribute to fostering a collaborative and supportive environment.

English as a Second Language (ESL)

Our ESL program provides individualized support to students who regularly use or hear a language other than English at home. Identified students are evaluated by a Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) and a plan outlining services supporting identified needs, such as pre-teaching, graphic organizers, and foundational skills instruction.

Bentonville Model: Core Plus More

The Bentonville Model prioritizes universal access to high-quality instruction while addressing individual needs through:

- **Tier 1 Instruction**: All students access high-quality instruction.
- **Intervention/Acceleration**: Tailored support based on student needs.
- **Individual Education Plans (IEPs)/Language Proficiency Assessment Committee**

Support Types

1. **Consult/Indirect**: Special educators provide guidance to general educators on strategies, accommodations, and progress monitoring.
2. **Resource**: Direct instruction and support in general classrooms or pull-out settings.
    a. **Push-In**: Support delivered within the classroom, focused on essential or foundational learning targets.
    b. **Pull-Out**: Targeted instruction outside the general classroom for essential skills or enrichment opportunities.
3. **Para Support**: Paraprofessionals provide supplementary classroom support.

Responsive Systems and Services

Our inclusion framework aligns with local, state, and federal guidelines to promote belonging, safety, and holistic growth. Services include:

- Response to Intervention (RTI)
- Special Education Services and Supports
- Gifted and Talented Programs
- Socioeconomic support (e.g., free/reduced lunch, clothing closets)
- Counseling for social-emotional well-being
- English Language Learner (ELL) services

Plan for Implementation and Review

The Vision and Policy Development Coalition as well as the Inclusion Policy Committee and the Leadership Team for The International School at Mary Mae Jones oversee the policy's implementation. Key actions include:

- Communicating the policy to parents in multiple languages through the IB Coordinator and school website.
- Regular evaluation by the Principal and Assistant Principal through classroom observations and presentations.
- Policy reviews every three years or earlier as necessary to ensure alignment with best practices and community needs.

This policy reflects the values and commitments of The International School at Mary Mae Jones,

ensuring equitable opportunities for all students.

Appendix

Multilingualism: The ability to speak, understand, or use multiple languages. In education, it refers to recognizing and supporting students who speak more than one language, treating linguistic diversity as a strength.

Response to Intervention (RTI): A structured approach used in schools to identify and support students who need extra help with learning. It involves providing different levels of support based on students' progress and needs.

> **Differentiation**: A teaching strategy that adjusts instruction to meet the diverse needs of students. This can include modifying lesson content, teaching methods, or assessment types to ensure all students can learn effectively.
>
> **Scaffolding**: A teaching method that provides temporary support to help students grasp new concepts or skills. As students gain confidence and ability, the support is gradually reduced, allowing them to work independently.
>
> **Enrichment Opportunities**: Activities and learning experiences designed to challenge and engage students beyond the standard curriculum. These may include advanced coursework, hands-on projects, field trips, or creative problem-solving activities.

504 Plans: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 protects individuals with disabilities from discrimination in programs and activities that receive federal funding. Under Section 504, students who qualify receive accommodations that provide equal access to education. These accommodations are determined by a committee, including students, parents, and school staff, based on the student's individual needs.

Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC): A group of educators, administrators, and parents that makes decisions about the language support services for students who are learning English. The LPAC reviews language assessment results, determines if a student qualifies for English language services, and monitors progress to ensure they receive the appropriate support. This committee meets regularly to adjust services based on the student's needs and state requirements.

Special Education Services and Supports: Children with disabilities receive specially designed instruction through a continuum of alternative placements and supplementary services in conjunction with regular classroom instruction as determined by the Individualized Education Plan.

Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is a written plan that describes the special education services and support a child with a disability will receive at school. It is created by a team that includes teachers, parents, and specialists to help the child succeed. The IEP includes learning goals, classroom accommodations, and any extra help the child may need. It is reviewed each year to make sure it meets the child's needs.

Division of Elementary and Secondary Education: *What is Inclusion?*

Definition of *Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)*: LRE means that a student with a disability should have access to the general education classroom and curriculum whenever appropriate and should not be removed from the general education classroom unless learning cannot be achieved even with the use of supplementary aids and services.

Key Aspects of LRE:

1. Inclusion First: Schools must first consider placement in general education with supports before considering more restrictive settings.
2. Continuum of Services: If a general education classroom is not appropriate, schools must provide a range of placement options (e.g., resource rooms, self-contained classrooms, specialized schools).
3. Individualized Decision-Making: LRE decisions are made based on a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP), ensuring the placement meets their unique needs.
4. Supports and Accommodations: Schools must provide necessary accommodations, modifications, supports, and services to help students succeed in the general education setting before considering alternative environments.
5. Access to Peers Without Disabilities: Even if students need specialized instruction, they should still have opportunities to interact with their non-disabled peers as much as possible.

LRE is part of IDEA (20 U.S.C. § 1412(a)(5)), which requires that:

- "To the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities… are educated with children who are not disabled."
- "Special classes, separate schooling, or other removal… occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily."

Resources:

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations)

Bentonville Schools Board Policy Main Page
Code 5.5 Gifted and Talented
Code 5.6 Special Education
Code 5.10 English Language Learner

Bentonville Schools Inclusive Practices Model

International Baccalaureate Organization.
(2022). *Access and inclusion policy*. IB.

(2020). *Learning Diversity and Inclusion* in IB programmes. IB.