

International Baccalaureate Diploma Program

Inclusion Policy



IB Policy for students with learning differences:

Notre Dame Prep provides an inclusive learning environment that removes barriers for students with diagnosed or temporary challenges that could interfere with their access to a rigorous and engaging educational experience.

Programs

NDP offers two programs to meet the needs of students with learning disabilities:

- **Learning Center:** A familiar model with extended time, preferential seating, teacher coaching, study classes with a learning specialist, and testing areas with limited distractions.
- **Learning Academy:** A more extensive program with accommodations that include those mentioned above. The Learning Academy Director collaborates with teachers to modify classroom instruction and materials to meet the idiosyncratic needs of our students with learning challenges. During student's freshman and sophomore years, a learning academy specialist shadows a small cohort of four to six students throughout their academic classes to assist them with independent and group work and to monitor their progress. This group meets daily to work on homework, projects, and assessments.

Leadership and governance: Notre Dame's Learning Inclusivity Committee, consisting of the directors of the Learning Center and Learning Academy, social worker, teachers, and administrators, meets twice annually to evaluate the effectiveness of the programs and recommend appropriate modifications.

Student support: Student placement in either the Learning Center or Learning Academy is based on evaluations conducted by the NDP and the recommendation of the Learning Inclusivity Committee. Notre Dame Prep recognizes that each student has unique learning needs that are addressed with customized learning accommodations.

Teacher support: The Learning Academy director will coach teachers on current strategies best to meet the needs of students with learning differences. This includes, but is not limited to, practices such as appropriate proximity, pacing, providing written and verbal instructions, check-ins, chunking tasks, and visual representations of concepts.

Culture through policy implementation: In addition to academic support, teachers will be instructed by the directors of the Learning Center and Learning Academy and our social work staff regarding the sensitivity and empathy required to educate students with learning differences properly. Many of these students suffer from anxiety and depression associated with their unique challenges. NDP believes it is essential to foster a culture of empathy, open-mindedness, and a solutions mindset to provide a welcoming and challenging environment for all our students.

Coherent curriculum: Approaches to teaching and assessment will be based on the individual needs of the student. The curriculum should be scaffolded to include definitions of unfamiliar vocabulary, clear and concise language, and frequent formative assessments for understanding. An accessible curriculum prevents disengagement and encourages lifelong learning.

Documentation

Parents and guardians should submit IEPs, 504 Plans, and other professional evaluations to Notre Dame Prep. A student's local public school district is responsible for maintaining state-approved IEPs, and 504 Plans. Notre Dame will provide parents with a customized accommodation plan that may be used for college admission and standardized testing. Parents or guardians may encounter institutions that require state-approved IEPs and 504 Plans and are responsible for maintaining this documentation.

IB Assessment

Any student who has a 504 Plan is eligible for special arrangements with the school to assist the candidate during their preparation of work for assessment and in their written examinations.

Students are advised upon program entry of the rigorous program requirements to ensure appropriate placement and academic success. In addition to employing teaching strategies that include differentiation for students with special needs, students are also supported through special arrangements if necessary.

Testing accommodations support students in demonstrating their skills, knowledge, and abilities without being impacted by their disabilities. Testing accommodations include the following but are not limited to: extended time, change of time organization (breaks/additional breaks), separate location, location with minimal distraction, preferential seating, large type editions of tests, directions read and reread aloud.

Teachers use these testing accommodations throughout the course so students are well-prepared for the format and expectations of their exit exams.

The IB publication, Candidates with Special Assessments Needs, will be referenced to provide support for program completion. The IB Coordinator will submit to IB the appropriate accommodations form, along with necessary documentation, requesting assessment modifications when needed.

All inclusive assessment arrangements other than those listed in section A9.1.3 must have prior authorization from the IB Assessment Centre. The IBO Coordinator will submit a Request for Inclusive Assessment Arrangements Form (D1) with supporting evidence and information including a medical/psychological/psycho-educational documentation and at least one piece of educational evidence.