

# SHS IB Inclusive/Special Education Policy

**The purpose of this policy is to describe the principles and practices for achieving the educational goals of all stakeholders, to make clear to the whole IB community the expectations and practices with regard to all aspects of Inclusive Education for the Sumter High School International Baccalaureate Diploma Program and to ensure that procedures and provisions remain consistent.**

## 1. Philosophy

The mission of Sumter High School, the hallmark in academics, arts, and athletics, is to provide exemplary learning experiences in order to ensure that **each** student has the skills to compete in our global society. We envision a society that is educated, just and sustainable. As an IB World School, our IB Diploma Program is a portion of the larger entity, Sumter High School and the IB World community. The faculty and staff of the Sumter High School International Baccalaureate Diploma Program believe that inclusive education is a matter of human rights and social justice; we recognize that all of us experience dependence upon others at certain times in our lives. All students may experience barriers to learning at some point in their school career. Learner variability and diversity is valued in our IB classrooms. Therefore, we strive to build a community that is supportive and inclusive of all persons who choose to participate in the IB DP. In the publication, *Learning Diversity in the International Baccalaureate Programmes* (2010), the IB states, “Inclusion is the learner profile in action, an outcome of dynamic learning communities.” In our school setting, “inclusion” refers to a broad understanding that embraces the diversity of all learners and all minority groups (whether by language, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, learning support requirements, medical, or other challenges). This means that IB students who may experience educational barriers will find a culture of collaboration, shared responsibility, mutual respect, and support in our IB and Sumter High School community. Working together, we strive to identify and remove those barriers such that access and engagement in learning are increased for all students; and a sense of belonging, safety and self-worth are promoted. To that end, we make reasonable adjustments for students who have learning support requirements, including those of additional language learners. Additional language learners are students “whose current course of study and assessment is delivered in a language that is not their first, best, or native language and whose language is below the level that is deemed proficient” (*Candidates with Assessment Access Requirements*, 2017). We acknowledge the idea that every teacher is a language teacher.

The IBO and we also believe “all candidates must be allowed to take their examinations under conditions that are as fair as possible. Where normal examination conditions and assessment procedures would put candidates at a disadvantage and prevent them from being able to demonstrate their skills and knowledge adequately, reasonable forms of accommodation may be authorized” (*Handbook of Procedures for the Diploma Programme*, 2017). These individual needs may include but are not limited to learning disabilities; autism spectrum disorders; and/or physical, sensory, medical or mental health issues. In support of and in cooperation with Sumter School District’s policies and national, state, and local legislation, The Sumter High IB Diploma Program does not “discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, or age in admission to, treatment in its program and activities. We believe in supporting all of our students, including those with learning support requirements, so that conditions for the program are as fair and equitable as possible, thereby empowering all IB students to have meaningful access to the IB curriculum and its assessments.

### **Federal Legal Requirements:**

The *Rehabilitation Act of 1973* and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 forbid discrimination in schools based on disability. Section 504 is in this act. Section 504 defines “disability” in very broad terms. Section 504 defines a person with a disability as someone who: has a physical or mental

impairment that “substantially” limits one or more major life activity (such as reading or concentrating); has a record of the impairment; and is regarded as having an impairment, or a significant difficulty that isn’t temporary.

In 2001, the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act*, commonly known as the No Child Left Behind Act, called for schools to be accountable for academic performance of all students, whether or not they had disabilities.

The *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*, or IDEA, was created in 1990 and is a modification of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act. This law ensures that special needs students receive appropriate free public education in the least restrictive environment necessary to meet those students’ needs. It helps students receive the extra assistance they need but allows them to participate in the same activities as children without special needs whenever possible.

The *Education for All Handicapped Children Act*, passed by Congress in 1975, was the first special education law directed at students with physical and mental disabilities. The law stated that public schools must provide children with special needs with the same opportunities for education as other children.

### **IB Requirements:**

As articulated in the *Programme standards and practices*, the following practices require schools to demonstrate their support for learning diversity.

- A9. The school supports access for students to the IB programme and philosophy.
- B1:5. The school develops and implements policies and procedures that support the programmes.
- B2:8. The school provides support for its students with learning and/or special educational needs and support for their teachers.
- C1:6. Collaborative planning and reflection incorporates differentiation for students’ learning needs and styles.
- C2:8. The written curriculum provides opportunities for reflection on human commonality, diversity, and multiple perspectives.
- C3:6. Teaching and learning addresses human commonality, diversity, and multiple perspectives.
- C3:10. Teaching and learning differentiates instruction to meet students’ learning needs and styles.
- C3:14. Teaching and learning fosters a stimulating learning environment based on understanding and respect.
- C3:15. Teaching and learning encourages students to demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways.

(from the IB Website [The IB guide to inclusive education: a resource for whole school development](#)).

## **2. Practices**

### **Identification:**

When students begin their junior year of the IB program, the IB Coordinator generates a roster of students and submits it to the 504/IEP Administrator in the building. The 504/IEP Administrator reviews the list and informs the IB Coordinator of any students who have a 504 plan/IEP in place at the school. Teachers of IB students who have 504 plans/IEPs are given a copy of those plans and are required to make the reasonable adjustments listed therein. Additionally, the IB Coordinator uses the school’s student information database (PowerSchool) to see if a student has an IEP in place. If the database indicates that a student has an IEP, then the IB Coordinator contacts the Special Education Administrator to confirm that the information in the student’s IEP has been shared with the teachers of the IB student, and all involved collaborate to assist the student with his or her learning support requirements and to engage in

problem-solving strategies when needed. It is important that parents are forthcoming concerning a student's learning support requirements and cooperative concerning professional documentation. In selecting courses for students, the guidance counselor, parents, students, and coordinator work together to choose subjects which will allow them to demonstrate their strengths and empower them as learners.

### **Addressing Learning Support Requirements within the School and IB Classroom:**

Teaching and Learning in the IB classroom addresses human commonality, diversity, and multiple perspectives. Reasonable adjustments for learning and assessment are made based on student needs. The school facilities are accessible to all members of the community (wheelchair ramps, elevators, assistive technology, bilingual signage, etc.) The IB Coordinator meets with the student, parents, and teachers to discuss any needed learning provisions. Teachers are encouraged to use creativity with regard to physical spaces when needed. The teachers collaborate with the student and parents, as well as other teachers and staff, concerning how the student's needs will best be met in their individual classrooms and to decide on the best routes of communication for monitoring the student's progress. Teachers are expected to inform the IB Coordinator if problems or concerns arise. The Special Education Administrator is responsible for training IB Teachers concerning all legal requirements as they pertain to SEN students. Teachers are aware that student records are confidential in nature, are informed of policies regarding confidentiality, and are expected to adhere to those policies. All IB DP teachers are expected to be familiar with the IB publication, *Meeting Student Learning Diversity in the Classroom*, 2013 and are expected to refer to it as a tool in removing educational barriers for students who have educational support needs. In the case of internally assessed work for the IB, teachers must not make any adjustments when marking a student's work.

### **Principles of Teaching for Learning Diversity**

"The four principles of good practice identified by the IB as promoting equal access to the curriculum for all learners are: affirming identity and building self-esteem, valuing prior knowledge, scaffolding and extending learning" (*Learning diversity in the International Baccalaureate programmes*, 2016).

- **Showing Value for Prior Knowledge**
  - Assess existing knowledge, strengths, and interests
  - Recognize there may be gaps or overlaps in learning
  - Account prior learning when designing, differentiating, and planning new learning
- **Scaffolding learning**
  - Smaller steps incorporated into the learning process
  - Students working towards mastery
  - Teachers providing constructive learning feedback at all stages
  - Teachers using tools and strategies such as re-teaching, demonstrations, experiential learning, chunking information, visual aids, templates and graphic organizers
- **Extending Learning for All**
  - Creating Optimal Learning Environments
    - Students are accepted for who they are.
    - Students are valued for their strengths.
    - Expectations for students are high but realistic.
    - Students are listened to, have their opinions sought, and are provided with opportunities to succeed.
    - Students have opportunities to develop the attributes of the Learner Profile
  - Technology
    - Evident but seamless in the curriculum
    - Accessible to all learners, used to facilitate classroom environments that are inclusive and diverse by design, and useful in enhancing curriculum design and lesson planning

- adaptive to many contexts: cultural, physical, and educational
- supportive of intercultural understanding, global engagement and multilingualism
- helps to foster collecting, creating, designing, and analyzing significant content
- Collaboration
  - Group research projects
  - Debates
  - Role-play
  - Collaborative planning
  - Collaborative teaching

### **Addressing Learning Support Requirements with IB Assessments:**

For students who have assessment access requirements, the IB Coordinator informs the IBO using the appropriate forms and providing the necessary documentation of the learning support requirements of students requiring inclusive assessment arrangements that require authorization such as extended time on modified examination papers. Consent of the parent is required before the documentation can be submitted. Individuals who give consent need to be aware that if a student transfers to another school, the coordinator of the new school will be able to see the request and supporting documents. Once the IB Coordinator learns of the decision of the IB, the student, parents, and teachers involved will be informed. Inclusive assessment arrangements are planned in advance to give the student time to learn to use them effectively in the classroom in preparation for IB assessments. The school is responsible for making all arrangements and for providing assistive technology if needed.

### **Current Learning Needs:**

When needs concerning inclusion arise, the aptitude of the individual student for IB coursework may place natural limitations for a particular student, and the best interest of the student must be of greatest importance. Currently, there are four students in our program who have academic 504 plans. There is one student who has limited English proficiency.

### **Documentation and Monitoring:**

The classroom teachers of IB courses and the IB Coordinator have copies of any IEP or 504 Plans for students requiring learning support. Teachers are expected to provide the support required. Teachers are expected to document provisions in support they provide. Meeting the needs of learning support requirements necessitates a collaborative team approach. Students and their parents have a responsibility to monitor the delivery of that support. The coordinator has a responsibility to monitor the delivery of that support. Building support personnel also monitor the delivery of and learning support requirements. Thus all stakeholders share in the responsibility of delivery and monitoring.

## **3. Links to Inclusive Education, Language, Academic Honesty, and Admissions Policies**

### **Inclusion and Assessment**

Students participating in the IB DP of Sumter High School who receive classroom adjustments through a 504 Plan or IEP will receive those same learning provisions within the IB coursework and assessments as authorized by the IBO. Students, their parents, and their inclusive education teachers are responsible for informing the IB classroom teachers and coordinator of all reasonable adjustments required. Teachers differentiate their instruction and assessments to accommodate students with particular inclusive education needs. Assessment is to be accessible in terms of design, content, and medium to give every student the opportunity; ongoing, diverse, and relevant to the learner; flexible, not fixed, providing multiple opportunities for learners to demonstrate skills and express themselves. All students should be allowed to demonstrate their understandings under assessment conditions that are as fair as possible. Assessment is accessible and offers equal opportunity while safeguarding the integrity of assessment.

### **Inclusion and Second/Additional Language Learners**

The link between inclusion and Additional Language Learners is inherent to being “inclusive.” Students identified as second/additional language learners of English in our school are encouraged to participate in our IB DP. Students, their parents, and second language support teachers are responsible for informing the IB classroom teachers and coordinator of the enrollment of second language learners in the DP. Teachers differentiate their assessments to provide learning support for students with second language learner needs.

### **Inclusion and Academic Honesty**

Students with learning support requirements shall not receive support that would give them advantage over other students. The provision of learning support requirements shall be limited to those changes that serve to equalize opportunity. Expectations regarding academic integrity are clearly communicated and authentic student work is highly regarded. Consequences for misconduct are clearly communicated.

### **Inclusion and Admissions**

While our Admissions Policy stipulates that students must have no grade lower than “70” for any prerequisite course, circumstances will be taken into consideration where a student’s performance showed improvement over time even if the final mark for the course does not reflect this growth. It is the assessment of the student’s readiness, willingness, and work ethic which eclipse past academic performance. In such cases, the IB teacher of the given course will conduct an interview with the student to determine his or her understanding of the whole course in question. Significant consideration will be given to a student’s aptitude in making a final decision.

## **4. The Implementation, Evaluation, and Review of the Assessment Policy**

### **Training Teachers new to the IB Program**

The IB Coordinator, any course veteran(s), and new teacher(s) will meet within the first two weeks of the start of the school year in a small group or one-on-one training session following the sharing of the policy by email. Additionally, teachers new to teaching in our IB program will receive training on the IBO document, *Meeting Student Learning Diversity in the Classroom*, 2013, as part of their orientation to the IB DP.

### **Communication and Review of the Assessment Policy**

Annually, the IB Faculty and administration will receive the latest draft from the IB Coordinator by email within the first two weeks of school for their review. They may email their questions and concerns to the coordinator for discussion at the first IB Faculty meeting of the school year. Changes will be made by consensus of those present at that meeting. The document “Self Review Framework” for Inclusive Education available on the website [The IB guide to inclusive education: a resource for whole school development](#) is a tool that may be used in the review process.

Annually, IB Students and their parents will receive written copies of the policy within the IB student handbook within the first month of the school year. Students and their parents will be solicited for their input for any revision(s) that may be needed.

Other IB stakeholders may view the policy any time online on the school’s IB website. Questions, comments, or concerns may be emailed to the IB coordinator.

## References and Resources

*Candidates with Assessment Access Requirements.* International Baccalaureate Organization, 2017.

*Diploma Program: From Principles to Practice.* International Baccalaureate Organization, 2015.

The IB guide to inclusive education: a resource for whole school development. Online.

*Handbook of Procedures 2017.* International Baccalaureate Organization, 2017.

*Learning Diversity and Inclusion in IB Programmes.* International Baccalaureate Organization. 2016.

*Meeting Student Learning Diversity in the Classroom.* International Baccalaureate Organization, 2013.