



International Baccalaureate Program at Myers Park High School

**Inclusion Policy
Revised March 2020**

Introduction

We believe that all students should participate as fully as possible in the IB Middle Years Program (MYP) and the Diploma Program at Myers Park High School. As a school, we strive to ensure that our students with special education needs are included to the fullest extent possible and that those students experience consistent academic success. We support the learning of all students by appropriately addressing their unique learning needs. It is the school's goal to help each student achieve the attributes of the IB Learner Profile as well as to assist them in being successful in academic and non-academic environments.

International Baccalaureate Program at Myers Park High School

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The purpose of this document is to:

- Communicate to all stakeholders in our IB community – administrators, teachers, students, and parents – the programmatic expectations for creating and maintaining an inclusive educational environment for all learners as required by IBO.
- Provide clear guidelines to all stakeholders by defining appropriate vision, goals, and practice in the context of the Diploma Programme at Myers Park High School.
- Establish clear responsibilities of all stakeholders.
- Outline the various accommodations and support opportunities that are available to students and teachers.

IB Policy

Myers Park High School is in full compliance with the IB programme standards and practices (2014): The following are “examples” included in the school’s Special Needs Policy.

- A9 The school supports access for students to the IB programme(s) and philosophy.
- B1:5 The school develops and implements policies and procedures that support the programme(s).
- 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 style
- C3:10 Teaching and learning differentiates instruction to meet students’ learning needs and styles.

Special Education Needs Policy Goals

- Adhere to national, state, and local laws regarding Exceptional Student Education
- Ensure that the special needs of our students are identified early, assessed, and provided for
- Clarify the expectations of all stakeholders
- Identify roles and responsibilities of stakeholders
- Assist all students in accessing all elements of the school curriculum and assessment policy

The administration, faculty, and staff at Myers Park High School acknowledge that:

- Our students have different educational and learning needs, abilities, and goals
- Students gain knowledge and skills at different rates and through different means • All students are capable of learning and they are unique
- Our school welcomes all students Responsibilities of the IB Coordinator
- Applies to the IB for students' accommodations in assessment type and circumstances
- Works collaboratively with faculty to support students with special education needs
- Provides examination accommodations as needed and approved by the IB
- Maintains discretion and confidence in providing special education needs services

Admission requirements

Students with special needs are encouraged to consider the MYP and IB Diploma options. The same entrance and continuation requirements apply to all students at Myers Park High School. Students only need to self select courses for the MYP program and meet the course completion requirements for the DP program.

Instruction

Individualized instruction and student achievement are valued in our school district and Myers Park School. This is evident through the services that are available, including:

- Specially designed instruction to meet the needs of students with disabilities
 - Access to the general curriculum and intervention programs designed to provide maximum opportunities for instruction in the general-education setting
 - Continuum of service, including consultation, co-teaching, and self-contained settings
 - Curriculum-driven instruction: North Carolina Standard Course of Study, North Carolina Extended Content Standards, and MYP and IB Diploma standards
 - Related services that include but are not limited to speech, occupational, and physical therapy
 - Specialized instruction for students with hearing, visual, and physical disabilities
 - Modified materials, including but not limited to books on tape, large-print materials, and specialized equipment and furniture
 - Accessible space to meet the needs of students with physical disabilities
- Differentiated Instruction
- Myers Park High School teachers recognize that there is a diversity of learners in every classroom, and students are more successful when they are able to construct meaning based on their own readiness levels, interests, and learning profiles while ensuring that all students come to a similar grasp of a skill or idea. Teachers differentiate instruction with an individual student, within a small group, or with a whole class. In addition to modifications teachers make for all students without official documentation, students with special needs are served under two plans: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (504) and Individual Education Plan (IEP), mandated by The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

- Appropriate technology to support students
- A9.1.2 Assessment arrangements not requiring authorization (The Handbook of procedures for the Diploma Programme)
- A9.1.3 Assessment arrangements requiring authorization (The Handbook of procedures for the Diploma Programme)

Continuum of Services

A full continuum of services is offered at Myers Park High School, including inclusive practices. This means that students with disabilities may receive co-teaching, pull-out special education, and self-contained settings for specific needs. These decisions are made by 504 and IEP teams.

Intervention Team

Many students begin the 504 or IEP process after being identified by the school based Intervention Team (IT). The IT is a multi-disciplinary school team based on the System of Care (SOC) philosophy that provides the necessary educational support to promote individual student success. The IT can address any academic/behavioral/social-emotional factor that affects academic success. The IT process occurs within a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS). MTSS is the practice of providing high quality instruction matched to student needs, monitoring progress frequently to make decisions about changes in instruction or goals, and applying student data to important educational decisions. When a student displays complex academic and/or behavioral difficulties, there are more intensive support services, which can be provided through the IT process. This process provides interventions that help the student perform successfully in the general education environment.

Benefits of Intervention Team

- Provides early identification of barriers to student success and achievement
- Maximizes individual student strengths and progress

- Increases family engagement
- Increases efficiency in addressing student needs
- Decreases discipline problems
- Improves student attendance
- Improves utilization of resources (school and community)
- Identifies school-wide issues and trends

Team-Initiated Problem Solving Model (TIPS)

North Carolina has adopted the Team-Initiated Problem Solving Model (TIPS) as the process that will be used to address student needs and ensure their success. TIPS is a framework for conducting effective meetings and using data for problem-solving and decision making. Within a problem-solving model, a team makes instructional decisions based upon student performance. Students may be presented with a variety of scientifically research-based interventions that can be adjusted based upon student needs and progress.

The steps included in the TIPS model are:

- Collect and use data

- Identify problems
- Develop hypotheses
- Discuss and select solutions
- Develop and implement action plan
- Evaluate and revise action plan

Collect and use data – this step occurs in conjunction with all of the other steps; teams use screening, pre-referral, and progress monitoring data to make decisions about students during the entire process.

Identify problems – during this step, the team creates a precision problem statement, meaning that the problem is defined in observable and measurable terms including an analysis of the data that reflects the occurrence of the problem.

Develop hypotheses – during this step, the team examines all available data and creates a hypothesis statement in regards to why the team thinks that the problem may exist. The team needs to consider all domains that may be impacting performance (Curriculum, Instruction, Environment, and Learner).

Discuss and select solutions – during this step, the team identifies possible research-based interventions and uses the acquired information to determine which interventions will most likely result in the student making progress in the targeted skill.

Develop and implement action plan – during this step, the team defines the specific intervention plan details including intervention and progress monitoring details (e.g., who, what, when, where, how). Once the plan is finalized, then interventions and progress monitoring strategies identified on the plan are implemented with fidelity by the designated staff members. Fidelity means that interventions and progress monitoring were completed the way that they were designed to be implemented.

Evaluate and revise action plan – during this step, the collected data is analyzed by the team in order to determine if the student has responded to the intervention, if the student has met short-term goals, and if the student is displaying a rate of progress that would result in meeting the grade level standard (or long-term goals) within a reasonable amount of time (i.e., closing the gap between them self and peers). Teams may then decide to modify the action plan based upon the student response data.

School Board Guidelines/Policy Regarding Individual Education Plans (IEP)

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that public schools create an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for every student receiving special education. The IEP is meant to address each student's unique learning issues and include specific educational goals. The IEP is a legally binding document. The school must provide everything it promises in the IEP.

Before an IEP is written for a student with a disability, the school must first determine whether the student qualifies for special education services. To qualify, the student's disability must have an adverse effect on the student's educational progress.

Information Required for IEP

Present Level of Academic and Functional Performance

Required data - based student specific information:

1. Academic and functional strengths of the student
2. Academic and functional needs resulting from the disability
3. How the student's disability affects involvement and progress in the general education curriculum

Educational placement

Educational placement is determined by calculating the amount of time the student is with nondisabled peers. Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) Justification Statement:

- If the student will be removed from nondisabled peers for any part of the day (general education classroom, nonacademic services and activities), the IEP must explain why the services cannot be delivered with nondisabled peers with the use of supplemental aids and services.
- If a student is not removed from the regular education environment for any portion of the instructional day, no statement is necessary

Components of LRE Justification Statement:

1. What has been tried but did not work
2. Areas of need (must be reflected in IEP goals)
3. The type of services the student needs
4. When the student will participate with non-disabled peers

What does an IEP contain?

By law, all IEPs must contain the following elements:

- Student's present levels of educational performance (PLOP): This is a thorough description of the student's current abilities, skills, weaknesses and strengths. It is the part of the IEP that explains how the student's learning issues affect his or her ability to learn the general education curriculum. The PLOP provides details on how the student handles academic subjects and every day or "functional" activities, like socializing.

- The PLOP is based on teacher observations and objective data, like test results. It is important that the PLOP is not simply copied “as is” from one year’s IEP to the next.
- The results of the student’s evaluations and tests, including district-wide and state assessments.
- Special education and related services provided. The IEP spells out what kinds of support and services the student will receive. If the student is going to have speech therapy, for instance, it will state how many minutes a week he or she will receive this therapy.
- Accommodations: Accommodations are changes in how a student shows what he or she has learned. For example, he or she may be given extra time on tests.
- Modifications, which are changes in what is taught to, or expected of, a student.
- Supplementary aids and services: These are supports to help a student learn in the general education classroom. They might include a one-on-one aide, highlighted classroom notes, equipment, or assistive technology, such as software.
- Annual educational goals: These should be realistic, achievable and measurable. The IEP lists the academic and functional skills that the IEP team thinks the student can achieve by the end of the year.
- If the student has multiple or severe disabilities, the IEP must list short-term goals. These are also called objectives or benchmarks.
- The IEP must explain how the school will track student progress toward goals. In addition, it must describe how the school will share those results with parents/guardians.

- An explanation of how much the student will participate in general education classes and extracurricular activities: Participation at the fullest level possible is required by law. This is called the least restrictive environment.
- The date the IEP will go into effect.
- Depending on the student's age and situation, the IEP might also include:
 - A transition plan: This kicks in when the student turns 16. Transition planning includes services and support to help a student graduate from high school and achieve post-high school goals.
 - Extended school year services: Some students receive special education services outside of the regular school year, such as during the summer or, less commonly, during extended breaks like winter break.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended, is a civil rights statute, which prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities. This statute is enforced by the Office for Civil Rights (OCR). OCR enforces, also, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) reauthorized as the ADAAA of 2008 which extends this prohibition against discrimination to the full range of state and local government services (including public schools), programs, or activities regardless of whether they receive federal funding or not. Therefore, Section 504 is now part of the ADAAA and enforced as such.

Section 504 Process Steps per School Board Guidelines/Policy

Step 1 Referring a Concern

A concern about a student is presented by a parent or teacher. The Referral of Concern is completed with assistance of the school 504 coordinator. The concern may address behavioral, medical, physical, or emotional well-being that is limiting the student's ability to function at school. Any medical reports are included especially if the referral is for OT, PT or Audiology. All referrals for Related Services must have a parent signature before processing. If a psychoeducational evaluation report is provided by the parents, this report immediately is sent to the Exceptional Children (EC) department for processing before Section 504 is held. The referral may then go directly to 504 team and/or the school's Intervention Team (IT)

Step 2 Preparing for the Section 504 Evaluation

If referred for a 504, a parent/guardian must sign a Parent/Guardian Consent for Initial Section 504 Evaluation and are given a copy of the Parent/Guardian – Student Rights & Procedural Safeguards before any evaluation may be initiated. Related Service referrals must be reviewed by the Related Service provider for the area of concern. The school completes the Related Service Referral of Concern and sends it to the Section 504 office. During this time, information is collected using a variety of documented sources, which becomes the basis on which the student's eligibility is determined. When all information is collected, the Eligibility

Determination meeting is scheduled and a parent/guardian notice is sent. The meeting usually includes the school psychologist, school nurse, teachers, and any related service providers.

Step 3 Eligibility Determination

The 504 team meets to determine if the student meets eligibility under 504 and if an accommodation plan is needed. In determining if a student is eligible, the 504 team must review information from multiple sources and decide if there is enough information to make a decision. If there is insufficient information, the 504 team can request further evaluation or refer the student to the Intervention Team (IT). If the team determines the student is eligible, then the team must determine if services and supports are needed. If supports are needed, an accommodation

plan is created. If support is not needed, the team will not create a plan; however, the student continues to receive protection under 504 and will receive continual periodic reviews and monitoring. If a student is deemed not eligible, the meeting is complete.

Step 4 Accommodation Plan Development

Once a student is identified as being eligible under 504, a decision is made regarding the type and the extent of services the student needs. The plan is written to address the areas where the student has a substantial limitation with reasonable and appropriate accommodations. A behavior intervention plan may be needed for students with behavior difficulties and must be completed as soon as possible. The accommodations must fit the needs of the student currently. Plans are developed for what a student needs and to provide accessibility at the same level as nondisabled peers. Accommodations should not give students an undue advantage.

Step 5 Progress Monitoring and Follow-up

School staff are notified of a student's accommodations under 504. All necessary trainings are held and accommodations are implemented with the required progress monitoring. School staff must implement all accommodations on a student's plan. If an accommodation appears to not be benefitting a student, a meeting must be held to determine if that accommodation needs to be removed or replaced. Follow-up procedures include sending 504 paperwork to the district 504 Office for review and entering student information in PowerSchool and SharePoint. Paperwork is due within 24 hours of the meeting and will be returned for corrections.

Step 6 Review and Special Meetings

Progress monitoring, review meetings, and 3-year re-evaluations are conducted to determine if the student continues to meet eligibility and needs support. If the student needs a change, the plan must be revised to reflect the current needs of the student. School staff or the student's parent/guardian may request a meeting at any time. In addition to initial eligibility and review meetings, other meetings may include Exit and Graduation Reviews, Hospital/Homebound placement, and Manifestation Determination Reviews (MDR).

Additional Interventions

In addition to following federal, a state and district regulation for the education of Exceptional Children, the school has put in place the following interventions to support struggling learners:

- Students who are performing below mastery (80% success) are assigned to specific teachers for additional instruction during the Thursday/Friday Enrichment periods.
- Students who are below grade-level and/or are in danger of failing a subject are given Personalized Education Plans (PEPs), and using the Student Success Model, are brought to the grade-level Intervention Team for review.
- Teachers offer regular tutoring sessions.

Conclusion

Utilizing the policies and guidelines available from the IB and Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools, Myers Park High School strives to support a diverse student body of learners. Whether it be through teaching and learning strategies, resources, a 504, an IEP, or collaboration with experts and parents, our students are supported throughout the IB Middle Years and IB Diploma Programs.