

# Inclusion Policy

## Allen D. Nease High School

### International Baccalaureate Diploma Program

#### **Purpose**

Allen D. Nease's IB Program aims to ensure that all students are supported to gain academic and personal success at the highest achievable levels.

The purpose of this document is to communicate to our school and community stakeholders, especially students, their parents and all school and district staff, our goal to provide students with a safe and supportive learning environment.

#### **Philosophy**

It is the mission of St Johns County School District and Allen D. Nease High School "to identify and meet the unique educational needs of exceptional students and to provide support and resources to enhance educational opportunities so they may become productive citizens." This philosophy is most evident in the district and school's emphasis on self-sufficiency, caring, responsibility, and reflection in all learning experiences, especially how these attributes are displayed by productive, contributing citizens in a global society. Therefore, it is our vision to provide IB instruction that is learner-centered and universally-minded. All students will receive the necessary resources, guidance, accommodations, and differentiated instruction to engage with higher-level critical and creative thinking tasks as well as to achieve academic and personal success. Our policy draws its authority from the Diploma Programme: Handbook of procedures for the Diploma Programme, Learning diversity in the International Baccalaureate programmes: Special educational needs within the International Baccalaureate (2010), Candidates with assessment access requirements (2014) and The IB guide to inclusive education: A resource for whole-school development (2015) and Saint Johns County School District Exceptional Student Education Special Procedures and Practices (SP&P) (see attached).

Allen D. Nease High School supports the policy of the International Baccalaureate (IB) students with special assessment needs: "The IB believes that all candidates should be allowed to demonstrate their ability under assessment conditions that are as fair as possible. Where standard assessment conditions could put a candidate with special educational needs at a disadvantage by preventing him or her from demonstrating his or her level of attainment, special arrangements may be authorized. This policy applies to candidates affected by a temporary, long-term or permanent disability or illness, including candidates with a learning difficulty."

## Implementation

The Allen D. Nease High School IB program follows and implements procedures and protocols based upon the St. Johns County SP&P. The SEN Policy at Allen D. Nease High is communicated through the Allen D. Nease IB website. The IB Coordinator in conjunction with the Assistant Principal for ESE collaboratively work together to ensure all current IEPs, 504s and EPs are facilitated, monitored and implemented within our school. Case managers are assigned to individual IEPs dependent upon the diagnosis and type. Gifted EPs are monitored by a district itinerant teacher of the gifted through consultative services. District personnel is available to assist in all screenings and tests, including gifted screening, ELL (language), behavior testing, etc. Mental health and school social workers are available for screening or counseling services if referred by the IB Coordinator. Results of screening and testing are communicated to parent(s), students and school personnel by district trained personnel to interpret the results of testing during eligibility meetings.

## Goals

The goals of the SEN Policy are:

- 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 the access and use of the school curriculum and assessment policy.

The faculty, staff and administration acknowledge that:

- Our students have different and distinct educational needs, learning abilities, and goals;
- Students gain knowledge and skills at different rates and through different means;
- All students are capable of learning and the learning processes are unique to the individual;
- Our school welcomes all students of diverse backgrounds, abilities, experiences, and skills. Student need to feel welcomed and valued for their unique differences and contributions.
- All students need learning experiences that are engaging, rigorous, and differentiated.
- It is the responsibility of the caring adults in a learning environment to model and foster globally-minded and socially-responsible life-long learning. All students deserve learning experiences which stir their interest in and commitment to important and universal ideas.

## International Baccalaureate Principles

These principles are taken directly from *Candidates with Assessment Access Requirements* (IBO, 2014).

1.1 The IB must ensure that a grade awarded to a candidate in any subject is not a misleading description of that candidate's level of attainment, so the same standards of assessment are applied to all candidates, regardless of whether or not they have learning support requirements.

**Policy Review:** This policy is reviewed on a yearly basis to assure alignment with current school and district policies.

1.2 Inclusive assessment arrangements are intended to reduce the adverse effects of a candidate's long-term challenge(s) when demonstrating his or her level of attainment. The arrangements requested for a candidate must not give that candidate an advantage in any assessment component.

1.3 The inclusive assessment arrangements described in this document are intended for candidates with the aptitude to meet all assessment requirements leading to the award of the diploma or course results.

1.4 If inclusive assessment arrangements are necessary for a candidate during the course of their study of the Diploma Programme or practice examinations, the school may provide the arrangements. If the arrangements are required for assessment, this document lists the arrangements that do not require prior authorization from the IB. For all other arrangements, prior authorization from the IB Assessment centre is mandatory. Similarly, if a Diploma Programme candidate has difficulties meeting the requirements for creativity, action, service (CAS), IB Answers must be consulted.

1.5 The IB aims to authorize inclusive assessment arrangements that are compatible with those normally available to the candidate concerned. However, authorization will only be given for arrangements that are consistent with the policy and practice of the IB. It should not be assumed that the IB will necessarily agree to the arrangements requested by a school. Coordinators are required to provide information on the candidate's usual method of working in the classroom.

1.6 The IB is committed to an educational philosophy based on international-mindedness. Therefore, the inclusive assessment arrangements policy of the IB may not reflect the standard practice of any one country. To achieve equity among candidates with assessment access requirements, the policy represents the result of a consideration of accepted practice in different countries.

1.7 The IB will ensure that, wherever possible, arrangements for candidates with a similar type of access requirement are the same. Due to the cultural differences that occur in the recognition of learning support requirements and the nature of access arrangements granted in schools, there may be some compromise which may be necessary to help ensure comparability between candidates in different countries.

1.8 Each request for inclusive assessment arrangements will be judged on its own merit. Previous authorization of arrangements, either by the IB or another awarding body, will not influence the decision on whether to authorize the arrangements that have been requested by the coordinator.

1.9 The IB treats all information about a candidate as confidential. If required, information will only be shared with appropriate IB personnel and members of the final award committee, who will be instructed to treat such information as confidential.

1.10 The IB does not flag or annotate in any way the results of a candidate for whom inclusive assessment arrangements have been authorized.

1.11 If a school does not meet the conditions specified by the IB when administering inclusive assessment arrangements or makes arrangements without authorization, the candidate may not be awarded a grade in the subject and level concerned.

1.12 If it can be demonstrated that a candidate's lack of proficiency in his or her response language(s) arises from an identified learning support requirement, inclusive assessment arrangements may be authorized. (For subjects in groups 3 to 6, all candidates are allowed to use a translating dictionary)

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in the written examinations.)

1.13 If inclusive assessment arrangements are authorized for internal assessment, the IB may require the candidate's work to be submitted to the IB Assessment centre for review.

1.14 A school must not inform an examiner of a candidate's condition or adverse circumstance. Similarly, in the case of internally assessed work, teachers must not make any adjustments when marking a candidate's work. If appropriate, the IB will ensure that reasonable adjustments are applied.

1.15 The list of inclusive assessment arrangements available is revised regularly. The IB will consider alternative arrangements proposed by a coordinator, provided those arrangements could be made available to all candidates with similar requirements.

1.16 According to the document General regulations: Diploma Programme, a Diploma Programme candidate may participate in three examination sessions to be awarded the diploma. At the discretion of the IB, a candidate with learning support requirements may be allowed additional sessions.

1.17 If the nature of a candidate's challenge and/or the authorized inclusive assessment arrangement might disturb other candidates during an examination, the candidate must take the examination in a separate room and be supervised according to the regulations governing the conduct of Diploma Programme examinations.

1.18 Written examinations must be invigilated according to the regulations governing the conduct of Diploma Programme examinations. The person invigilating the candidate's examination must not be a relative of the candidate, or any other person with whom there may be an apparent or perceived conflict of interest.

1.19 Any issues that arise from the nature of the inclusive assessment arrangements, or any unforeseen difficulties encountered by the candidate, should be reported to IB Answers as soon as possible

## **SEN Terminology**

**Accommodation** - A generic term comprising all forms of arrangement, compensation or conditions that may be allowed for a candidate.

**Adverse circumstances** - Circumstances beyond the control of the candidate(s) that might be detrimental to the performance of the candidate(s) in one or more assessment component (for example, bereavement, natural disasters, civil unrest). "Adverse circumstances" do not include medical conditions or disability.

**Assessment component** - Each subject and level for the IB Diploma Program are divided into assessment components, for example, paper 1, paper 2 and internal assessment. Some components comprise discrete tasks that are undertaken separately. These separate tasks within a component, such as the map work section for a geography examination paper, are referred to in this document as a "part" of an assessment component.

**Exceptional circumstances** - Circumstances that are not commonly within the experience of other candidates with special assessment needs. The IB reserves the right to determine which circumstances qualify as "exceptional" and therefore justify a particular special arrangement.

**Invigilator** - A person, or persons, responsible for supervising an examination; also referred to as a "proctor" or a "supervisor". The invigilator of an IB examination may or may not be the coordinator.

**Special arrangements** - Changed or additional conditions during the assessment process for a candidate with special educational needs. These enable the candidate to demonstrate his or her level of attainment more fairly and are not intended to compensate for any lack of ability.

**Special assessment needs** - A candidate with special assessment needs is one who requires special arrangements in assessment conditions to demonstrate his or her level of attainment.

**Special educational needs** - This refers to candidates with individual learning needs, who have the intellectual capacity to meet all curriculum and assessment requirements, and who require special arrangements to demonstrate their level of achievement. Candidates who require special assessment arrangements may display the characteristics of one or more of the following special educational needs.

**Specific learning issues, language and communication disorders** - Significant issues in reading, writing, spelling or manipulating numbers associated with issues in processing symbolic language (for example, problems interpreting music notation, dyslexia, dyscalculia).

Speech and language issues characterized by communication problems (for example, aphasia, dysphasia, articulation problems):

***Physical and sensory conditions***

- Physical disabilities include a wide range of conditions that are not always immediately obvious, but affect mobility.
- Sensory issues: hearing—embraces an extensive range of hearing loss from mild to profound and can present communication difficulties; visual—includes difficulties with either the structure or function of the eye, affecting vision.

***Medical conditions***

- The most common being: congenital heart disease, epilepsy, asthma, cystic fibrosis, hemophilia, sickle cell anemia, diabetes, renal failure, eczema, rheumatoid disorders, allergies, leukemia and other cancers.

***Mental health issues***

- A wide range of conditions that can affect a person's state of mind, ranging from psychotic conditions, such as schizophrenia and manic depression, to eating disorders, anxieties and emotional distress caused by circumstances in a candidate's life.

**Technical language**

This refers to terminology specific to the subject being tested. It may be the target of the assessment and must be known by the candidate to understand fully the subject.

**Responsibilities:**

**District:**

It is the responsibility of St. Johns County Schools to:

- Provide annual Special Procedures and Policies to each school explaining procedures to be followed for each student.
- Provide necessary district personnel from the Exceptional Student Education department. Examples include a district social worker, district school psychologist, district mental health counselor, district itinerant teacher of the gifted, etc.
- Administer necessary screening and testing for needed evaluations
- Ensure necessary support personnel for 504 and IEP meetings when necessary

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**School:**

It is the responsibility of Allen D. Nease High School IB Program to:

- Ensure that the family of/and the student applying for the program is properly informed of policies and procedures.
- Ensure our program is in compliance with the federal and local laws as well as IB principles.
- Ensure teachers receive a copy of all 504 Plans and Individual Education Plans (IEP) for each student.
- Ensure all accommodations are provided for in each case.
- Ensure the school supplies training and resources needed to implement accommodations.

**IB Coordinator:**

It is the responsibility of the coordinator to:

- Work with families and faculty to support each student's special needs in a dignified and confidential manner.
- Gather documentation and coordinate meetings requesting inclusive arrangements.
- Apply for accommodations and provide proper documentation to IBO for each student with special needs.
- Coordinator with ESE Assistant Principal to ensure all IEPs and 504s are transitioned from middle school and after graduation.
- Provide exam accommodations that are approved by IBO.

**IB Teachers:**

It is the responsibility of the teachers to:

- Provide all accommodations and differentiated instruction for learning stated in the student's 504 Plan or IEP and comply with all local and federal laws.
- Identify students who are struggling and notify the coordinator so that additional support can be coordinated as well as the parents notified.
- Respect the student's confidentiality in the classroom.
- Facilitate critical and creative thinking through differentiated instruction.
- Nurture the traits of globally-minded, socially-responsible behavior.
- Create a safe and nurturing environment for life-long learning.

**Parents:**

It is the responsibility of the parents to:

- Provide the school with all necessary documentation needed.
- Act in a proactive manner to continually provide the school with any updates on the student's needs/changes.
- Attend meetings to create/update accommodation plans and/or discuss student's progress with teachers and coordinator.

**Students:**

It is the responsibility of the students to:

- Self-advocate for their needs.
- Participate not only in the classroom and contribute to the safe and nurturing classroom environment, but also as a member of the meetings held on their behalf.
- Demonstrate the attributes of globally-minded and socially-responsible behavior.
- Seek personal and academic success and exhibit the characteristics of life-long learning.

**Current Student Profile**

Class of 2024: 1- IEP, 4-504 Plans, 30-Gifted Educational Plans (EP)

Class of 2025: 5-504 Plans, 36-Gifted EPs

Class of 2026: 8-504 Plans, 46-Gifted EPs

Class of 2027: 3-504 Plans, 41-Gifted EPs

**References**

The Diploma Programme: Principles to Practice (August 2015)

Programme Standards and Practices (2020)

General Regulations: Diploma Programme (2016)

Assessment Principles and Practices-Quality Assessments in a Digital Age (2018)

Diploma Programme Assessment Procedures (2023)

Candidates with assessment access requirements (2014)

The IB guide to Inclusive Education: a resource for whole school development, and Candidates with special assessment needs, IBO, 2011.

Meeting student learning diversity in the classroom, IBO, 2013.

Learning diversity in the International Baccalaureate Programmes, IBO, 2010.

Saint Johns County Exceptional Student Education Special Procedures and Practices (2023).

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