

SOUTHWEST HIGH SCHOOL

SPECIAL NEEDS/INCLUSION POLICY

RATIONALE

The IB Programmes at Southwest High School endeavor to provide all students the necessary support to achieve at each student's personal best. This document is designed to communicate to all stakeholders - parents, students, teachers, and administrators - the expectations for creating and maintaining an inclusive educational environment for all IB students through the Middle Years Program (MYP), Career-related Programme (CP) and the Diploma Programme (DP) according to the Southwest High School mission:

Southwest High School develops young people to become principled, open-minded, caring members of society.

Recognizing that young people will inherit a society that is global in nature, we develop international mindedness in students and help them to appreciate the common elements of humanity that transcend nations, racial, ethnic, religious, and political boundaries.

Southwest High School promotes learning through inquiry, positive risk-taking and critical thinking. Students learn to be reflective and intentional in their thoughts and actions as well as to effectively communicate their knowledge and ideas. Understanding that a well-rounded education is more than academic.

Southwest High School strives to develop the whole person, nurturing balanced growth in the physical, social, emotional and intellectual spheres.

SPECIAL EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY

Minneapolis Public Schools is committed to ensuring that all students have the knowledge, skills and confidence they need to succeed, and that they are provided with the learning opportunities and supports required. As part of this philosophy, all students are given the opportunity to participate in the MYP or CP/DP to the best of their ability.

Tailoring our curriculum and teaching to meet the individual needs of our students is essential. An Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is developed for each student who qualifies for special education services.

- We believe all students can learn and have a right to a holistic and inclusive education in a caring and stimulating environment.
- We place great emphasis on the responsibilities of our entire school community to be aware of and provide for students with special educational needs.
- We believe all students will participate in their learning to the best of their ability.
- We view a student's education as a partnership between the student, the parent(s)/guardian(s), and the school.

COMMON PRACTICES

The language of instruction at Southwest High School is English, with the exception of our Language Acquisition classes. All students are required by state and district standards to successfully complete four years of English Language and Literature instruction.

Southwest High School strives to create a learning environment where all students can achieve their personal best.

PROGRAMME OF STUDY

Special Education teachers adapt their instruction to suit individual educational needs. Federal and state laws dictate that goals and objectives of an individual's IEP supersede the requirements of the MYP, CP or DP.

All teachers are committed to including all students in general education classrooms as determined by annual meetings. This includes students with identified and exceptional learning needs and are sensitive to the learning needs and styles of all students in their classroom, differentiating the delivery of the programmes as required. Special education teachers collaborate with general education teachers to address individual students' needs for success in the classroom.

General education teachers work with their Special Education students' case managers/support staff to structure supports and accommodations as identified in students' IEPs. For example:

- o Provide a student with extra time to complete a test or to use technology to assist them in a task.
- o Students are allowed to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding in a way that is appropriate for their abilities.
- o Differentiate instruction to meet the needs of all students in the classroom.

Due to the wide range of abilities for students in Federal Setting III throughout Minneapolis Public Schools, the IEP team ultimately needs to discern which elements of the MYP or DP will best serve their students' needs.

Their programs may include, but are not limited to, the following elements of MYP:

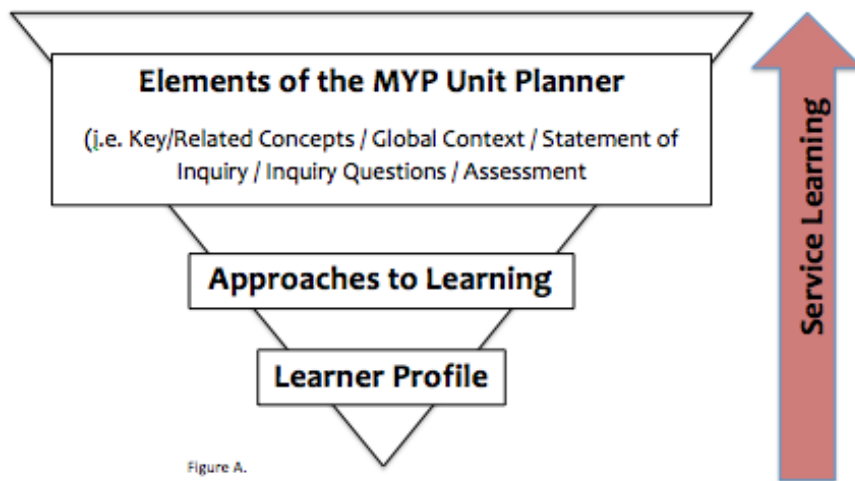


Figure A.

Some teachers, especially those working in Federal Setting III Programs, may determine that the best way to deliver MYP, CP or DP instruction is to solely address the Learner Profile characteristics in their instruction. This may be especially true for those programs serving students with significant cognitive disabilities. Other teachers might determine that to best meet their students needs, they would ALSO incorporate the Approaches to Learning or develop modified unit plans for their settings. The diagram above (figure A.) describes the range of implementation levels that will likely be found across the MPS district. MYP, CP and DP implementation will vary due to the wide range of unique needs of individuals within special education programs.

Teachers will strive to implement the Inquiry/Action/Reflection cycle inherent to the IB philosophy while ensuring that students have opportunities to participate in service learning projects as part of their school experience.

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STUDENTS

- o Work in conjunction with teachers to meet the goals of their IEP.
- o Strive to participate in MYP, CP and DP units to the best of their ability with help from general and special education teachers.
- o Use the Learner Profile attributes to achieve success in school.

PARENTS/GUARDIANS

- o Work with mainstream and special education teachers to reinforce learning at home.
- o Attend parent/teacher conferences
- o Attend IEP meetings

Their programs may include, but are not limited to, the following elements of the DP:

In addition to the Learner Profile and the Approaches to learning the DP and CP assessments are an integral part of each course. "The IB believes that 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. Candidates eligible for inclusive assessment arrangements are those with individual needs such as a specific learning disability, an emotional or behavioural difficulty, physical, sensory or medical conditions, or mental health problems." (Handbook of procedures for the Diploma Programme 2015)

Inclusive assessment arrangements authorized by the IB follow the Candidates with Assessment Access Requirements (IBO, updated 2014) principles and guidelines. Application for inclusive assessment arrangements must be made by November 15 for participation in the May examinations. Collaboration of parents, students, special education staff, and the CP or DP Coordinator is necessary to ensure all documentation is submitted to the IBO by the deadline.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Special education teachers will be included in school, District-wide, and IB MYP, CP and DP professional development. Teachers will continue to develop their skills with strategies for supporting the needs of all students.

ANNUAL REVIEW

The special needs policy will be reviewed to ensure that the policy remains a live document that reflects the needs and desires of our school and district.

COMMUNICATING THE POLICY

The policy will be placed on school websites and made available to families at parent/teacher conferences. It will be available in Spanish, Hmong, Somali, as well as English. As a whole we serve many students who are learning in a language other than their mother tongue. We view this as an asset and will continue to support these students in the future as a means of maintaining access for all students.

RESOURCES

Candidates with Assessment Access Requirements (updated 2014). Available: www.ibo.org

Handbook of Procedures for the Diploma Programme 2015. A9 Assessment access and special circumstances. Available: www.ibo.org

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