



FRANK C. MARTIN INTERNATIONAL K-8 CENTER SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY INCLUSION POLICY FOR SPED STUDENTS



IB INCLUSION IDEALS

“Inclusion is an “organizational paradigm” that involves change. It is an unending process of increasing learning and participation for all students. It is an ideal to which schools can aspire, but which is never fully reached. However, inclusion happens as soon as the process of increasing participation is started. Thus, differentiation is inclusion in practice. Inclusion and differentiation are most successful in the contexts of learning communities where there is a culture of collaboration that encourages and supports problem solving”. (Booth and Ainscow 2002).

SPED - varying exceptionalities, learning disabled, gifted with disability

Mission Statement

The International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme recognizes that our students come from a variety of cultures, ethnic backgrounds, and have a diverse range of social, academic, physical and other needs. There are many students who may have a recognized, special educational need; other students may have special needs that have not yet been diagnosed. Our faculty is committed to developing life-long learners guided by the principles of the IB learner profiles along with critical thinking skills and values that matter. Examples of these special needs include:

- specific learning disabilities (such as dyslexia and dyscalculia*)**
- language and communication disorders**
- emotional and behavioral difficulties**
- physical difficulties affecting mobility**
- sensory impairments (such as visual or hearing difficulties)**
- medical conditions (such as asthma, epilepsy and diabetes)**
- mental health conditions (such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, eating disorders and anxiety)**
- gifted and talented students**

*** *Dyscalculia* is a brain-based condition that makes it hard to make sense of numbers and math concepts**

Philosophy

Frank C. Martin International K-8 Center implements the MYP utilizing inclusive teaching techniques applied in the general education setting. Teachers design learning experiences that allow all students, including all those who have special educational needs, to meet the rigorous standards of the IB MYP. Teachers provide all students with opportunities to achieve these goals by carefully constructed differentiated teaching strategies. Differentiated teaching attempts to maximize student's potential, also allowing the student to demonstrate their learning in different ways.

IDEA

The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) is a federal law enacted in 1990 and reauthorized in 1997. It is designed to protect the rights of students with disabilities, by ensuring that everyone receives a free, appropriate, public education regardless of ability. Furthermore, IDEA strives not only to grant equal access to students with disabilities, but also to provide additional special education services and procedural safeguards.

Identification and Inclusion Model

Students with emotional, social and/or academic difficulties are referred to and reviewed by the Student Study Team which may include the parents, school counselor, school psychologist, school social worker and a school administrator. Students are evaluated to assess their individual needs and depending on those needs will be authorized for a 504 plan or IEP.

Special education services are individualized to meet the unique needs of students with disabilities. Special education may include individual or small group instruction, curriculum or teaching accommodations, related services such as physical, occupational, and speech therapy. These services are provided in accordance with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), which is specifically tailored to the unique needs of each student.

IDEA also grants increased parental participation and protection for students.

Frank C. Martin International K-8 Center assists students with additional professional support for the MYP faculty. On staff currently, there is one full time SPED teacher, an academic advisement counselor, and one part-time speech therapist.

This year, there are many students in the IB MYP who are receiving services through collaboration: support facilitation or consultation with the students' teachers to meet each student's needs.

Although the IB MYP can be very rigorous and intense for many students, this does not preclude the admittance of students with disabilities in accordance with federal law. Over

the years, the faculty has been committed to working with children who have disabilities by incorporating differentiated teaching techniques and specific accommodations to suit the needs of the student. In addition, a study hall has been established for all students along with extra tutorial instruction available before and after school for one hour, three times weekly.

Monitoring Student Success

We document our compliance for the needs of students with disabilities, through our Assistant Principal overseeing the SPED program and by updating each IEP or 504 plan* yearly. All information regarding the progress and performance of our SPED students will be contained in the student's personal cumulative folder.

Access to these files will be on a strictly "need to know" basis. The Assistant Principal, school counselor, and the SPED teacher will have immediate access always for updating new modifications to the student's cumulative files. SPED students may be tested individually or in small groups so that all accommodations concerning these students will be executed in accordance with federal law. This would include the Florida FSA, EOC or any other standardized test that may occur.

Response to Instruction/Intervention

Response to Intervention (RTI) is a process that provides intervention and educational support to all students at increasing levels of intensity based on their individual needs. The goal is to prevent academic problems, behavioral issues and intervene early so that students can be successful.

Improvement for delivery of services to students with disabilities is an ongoing process. The MYP staff meets monthly with an agenda and an open forum to discuss concerns and strategies. Workshops attended by the school counselor concerning SPED students, disseminates the latest data driven research concerning ideas for creative differentiated instruction. These meetings provide for a team approach to the small minority of students in the IB MYP to ensure that the student receives the maximum attention to not only achieve academic success, but also to achieve successful personal growth as a true well rounded IB student.

*504 Plans are for students with medical issues that require certain accommodations. 504 Plans are reviewed annually.