

# Jefferson County International Baccalaureate School



## Special Education Policy

### Philosophy

The Jefferson County International Baccalaureate School endeavors to ensure that all students are provided the support necessary to allow them to achieve academic success and reach their full potential as members of JCIB. This rationale is supported by the mission statement of the International Baccalaureate Programme, which is “to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.”

This document is designed to communicate to all stakeholders – parents, students, teachers and administrators – the expectations for creating and maintaining an educational environment for all IB students as required by IBO and supported by Jefferson County Public Schools. It provides clear guidelines by defining appropriate vision, goals, and practices within the Jefferson County International Baccalaureate School. This document also establishes clear responsibilities of all stakeholders.

It is the philosophy of IB, Jefferson County Public Schools, and the Jefferson County International Baccalaureate School that every student can learn. Every student should also be supported in learning the Approaches to Learning skills that are necessary for success as adults, including developing self-sufficiency, participating as caring and reflective members of society, and developing into productive citizens in the global market place. It is our vision therefore, to provide learner centered IB instruction wherein all students receive the necessary resources, guidance, accommodations, and differentiated instruction needed to develop according to the IB learner profile as well as acquire the skills necessary to demonstrate competencies reflected by the IB framework and curriculum. Our policy draws its authority from the following IBO documents: *MYP From Principles Into Practice* (2014), *Handbook of Procedures for the Diploma Program* (2010), *Candidates with Special Assessment Needs* (2011), and *Meeting Student Learning Diversity in the Classroom* (2013), as well as state and local resources including the Alabama State Department of Education document *Mastering the Maze: The Special Education Process* (2015) and *The Jefferson County Schools Comprehensive English Learner District Plan* (2014).

The Jefferson County International Baccalaureate 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.”

This document is designed to provide stakeholders “with information about the arrangements available for candidates with special needs during their preparation of work for assessment and in their written examinations. There is no intention to provide guidance on teaching methodology or resources.

The Jefferson County International Baccalaureate School meets all state and federal requirements:

- IDEA – Individuals with Disabilities Act
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
- ADA – Americans with Disabilities Act
- Assistive Technology Act
- The Jefferson County Schools Comprehensive English Learner District Plan

### **MYP Requirements**

Standard A9:

- The school supports access for students to the IB programme(s) and philosophy.

Standard A9a:

- The school strongly encourages participation for all students.

Standard B1.5b:

- The school has developed and implements an inclusion/special educational needs policy that is consistent with IB expectations and with the school’s admissions policy.

Standard B2.8:

- The school provides support for its students with learning and/or special educational needs and support for their teachers.

### **Special Education Needs Policy 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 accessing all elements of the school curriculum and assessment policy

The administration, faculty, and staff at Jefferson County International Baccalaureate 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.

### **International Baccalaureate DP 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.
- 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 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**

#### **Taken from *Candidates with Assessment Access Requirements (IB0, 2014)***

**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 assessment access requirements. The IB reserves the right to determine which circumstances qualify as "exceptional" and therefore justify a particular inclusive assessment 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.

**Inclusive Assessment 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.

**Assessment Access Requirements** - A candidate with assessment access requirements is one who requires access arrangements in assessment conditions to demonstrate his or her level of attainment.

**Learning Support Requirements** - Support and/or access required to enable some candidates, who have the aptitude to meet all curriculum and assessment requirements, reach their full potential in learning and assessment.

Candidates who require inclusive assessment arrangements may have learning support requirements due to one or more of the following:

Autism spectrum/Asperger's syndrome

Learning disabilities

Medical conditions

Mental health issues

Multiple disabilities

Physical and/or sensory challenges

Social, emotional and behavioral difficulties

Specific learning difficulties

Speech and/or communication difficulties

Second Language Learners (SLCN)

**Standard Score** - A score, which allows for comparisons, that is based on a scale with a constant statistical mean and standard deviation. Publishers of psychological tests report standard scores with a mean of 100 and standard deviation of 15.

**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.

## **Roles & Responsibilities**

### **Responsibilities of the School and District**

- The school will work with the Exceptional Education Department of the Jefferson County School System to make sure the program is in compliance with federal and local laws regarding students with special educational needs.
- The school and district will provide guidance to students with special education needs to help them make informed decisions concerning application to the program.
- The school, along with the Jefferson County Exceptional Student Services department, will raise staff awareness of the needs of our exceptional students.
- The school and district will provide resources for the implementation and continuation of the Special Education Needs Policy.
- School and District specialists will provide teachers with all IEP'S, 504, and ELL plan documentation.
- District Exceptional Student Services personnel, school specialists, and support facilitators will provide updates and host meetings for IEP and 504 reviews.
- The school will facilitate the provision of appropriate accommodations as outlined by Exceptional Student Services of the Jefferson County School System.

### **Responsibilities of the MYP IB Coordinator**

- The MYP IB Coordinator will demonstrate pedagogical leadership aligned with the philosophy of the programme.
- The MYP IB Coordinator will implement professional development aimed to support teaching and learning for all students.
- The MYP IB Coordinator will provide curriculum development support for teachers, faculty, and students.
- The MYP IB Coordinator will service as the liaison between the IB and the school to ensure most up-to-date practices are being implemented for the benefit of all teachers and students.

### **Responsibilities of the DP IB Coordinator**

- The DP IB Coordinator will apply to the IB for students' accommodations in assessment type and circumstances.
- The DP IB Coordinator will work collaboratively with faculty to support students with special education needs.
- The DP IB Coordinator will provide examination accommodations as needed and approved by the IB.
- The DP IB Coordinator will maintain discretion and confidence in providing special education needs services.

### **Responsibility of the Faculty**

- The classroom teacher will comply with all federal and local laws regarding special education needs.
- The classroom teacher will participate in all required training when available.
- The classroom teacher will identify struggling learners and refer the student to the counselor, IB coordinators, or Response to Instruction (RTI) chair as needed.
- The classroom teacher will implement the appropriate interventions as outlined in the Response to Instruction multi-tier support system.
- The classroom teacher will maintain accurate records of students' progress and communicate, as needed, with relevant stakeholders about progress.
- The classroom teacher with the assistance of the exceptional student services and specialists will become familiar with the needs of the regarded student.
- The classroom teacher will provide accommodations as outlined by the students' IEP, 504, or ELL Plan.
- The teacher will maintain discretion and confidentiality in providing services.

### **Responsibilities of the Parent**

- Parents will play an active role in their child's education.
- Parents will have knowledge of their child's entitlement within the school district policy.
- Parents will communicate to the school all information and documentation regarding their child's education needs.
- Parents will communicate with the school regarding any changes in their child's education needs.
- Parents will make request for needed child studies and services from the school or district in a proactive manner.
- Parents will provide documentation needed for IBO accommodation requests.

### **Responsibilities of the Student**

- Students will be proactive in asking for assistance from the school administrators, faculty, and staff.
- Students will be active participants in classes and meetings.
- Students will follow all Jefferson County School District and Jefferson County International Baccalaureate policies and procedures.



## References and Resources

*Candidates with Assessment Access Requirements*, IBO, 2014.

*From Principles Into Practice*, IBO, 2014.

*Meeting Student Learning Diversity in the Classroom*, IBO, 2013.

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

Exceptional Education Department, Jefferson County School System.  
[www.jefcoed.com](http://www.jefcoed.com)

English Language Learners Department, Jefferson County School System  
[www.jefcoed.com](http://www.jefcoed.com)

Alabama State Department of Education Student Assessment Program Policies and Procedures for Students of Special Populations, Alabama Department of Education, 2014.

ELs and SpEd Process, Alabama Department of Education, 2014

*IBO Handbook of Procedures for the Diploma Program*, IBO, 2010.

*Mastering the Maze: The Special Education Process*, Alabama State Department of Education Office of Learning Support for Special Education Services, 2015

*The Jefferson County Schools Comprehensive English Learner District Plan, Jefferson County EL Advisory Committee (2014)*