Special Education Needs Policy

Lincoln Park Academy
International Baccalaureate
Diploma Program
Rationale/Purpose

The IB Program at Lincoln Park Academy 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 the Lincoln Park Academy student body. This rationale is supported by the Lincoln Park Academy Mission Statement: “The mission of Lincoln Park Academy is to ensure that all students graduate from our safe and caring school, and are equipped with knowledge, academic skills and the desire to succeed as life long learners and positive contributors to our diverse society”

This document is designed to communicate to all of our 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 St. Lucie County Public Schools. It provides clear guidelines by defining appropriate vision, goals, and practices within the IB program at Lincoln Park Academy. This document also establishes clear responsibilities of all stakeholders.
Philosophy

It is the philosophy of the IB, St. Lucie Public Schools, and the IB Program at Lincoln Park Academy that every student can learn. Every student should also be supported in learning the creative thinking and learning skills that are necessary for success as adults. Goals include making them self-sufficient, caring and reflective members of society, and productive citizens in the global marketplace. It is our vision, therefore, to provide learner-centered IB instruction wherein all students receive the necessary resources, guidance, accommodations, and differentiated instruction needed for personal success. Our policy draws its authority from the IBO Handbook of Procedures for the Diploma Program (2014), Programme Standards and Practices (2014), Candidates with assessment access requirements (2013) and St. Lucie County Exceptional Student Education Policies and Procedures (2013).

The IB Program at Lincoln Park Academy 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. Procedures for requesting special arrangements are explained in the Handbook of Procedures for the Diploma Programme, the procedures manual for coordinators and teachers.”

The IB Program at Lincoln Park Academy 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
**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 Lincoln Park Academy 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.

**Individual Education Program (IEP) and 504 Plans**

An Individual Education Program (IEP) is a written statement of an educational program which is developed, reviewed, revised and implemented for a school-aged child with a disability.

The Section 504 Student Accommodation Plan documents the specific accommodations or supports the student needs to ensure that the individual needs of the student with a disability are met as adequately as the needs of non-disabled students. The comparison is to an average student in the general population. The Section 504 plan is designed to provide appropriate supports, not necessarily all of the supports that would “maximize the student’s potential” or “the best supports”.

**Response to Intervention (RTI):**

Uses qualitative and quantitative data to support structural differentiation in the classroom across the curriculum.

Enables teachers to employ specific teaching strategies to allow students at all levels to access the curriculum in all subject areas.
Differentiated Instruction:

Differentiated instruction is the practice of modifying and adapting instruction, materials, content, student projects and products, and assessment to meet the learning needs of individual students to ensure both academic growth and success in their community and world. In a differentiated classroom, teachers recognize that all students are different and require varied teaching methods to be successful in school. They see their role as creating that environment for their students.

Differentiation could include resources both inside and outside of the classroom based on the learning and emotional needs of a student. In our school students are supported in a manner that acknowledges their entitlement to share the same learning experiences that their peers enjoy. Wherever possible, students are not withdrawn from the classroom situation, however; we recognize that there are times when, to maximize learning, children need to work in small groups or one-on-one situations outside of the classroom in order to close significant achievement gaps.

Assessments:

The assessment of special education students reflects as far as possible their participation in the whole curriculum of the school. Accommodations should be provided so that students can demonstrate their knowledge and mastery of the essential concepts of a unit of inquiry. Accommodations allow students to reflect their learning in a way that best meets their needs. Accommodations on district, state, and national tests will be provided per the guidelines of permitted accommodations on standardized assessments set forth by the Florida Department of Education.

The IB Coordinator provides the IB with the necessary documentation regarding the special needs of students requiring accommodations such as extended time on examination papers. Once the IB Coordinator learns of the decision of the IB, the student, parents, and teachers involved will be informed.
International Baccalaureate Principles

These principles are taken directly from *Candidates with assessment access requirements* (IBO, 2013).

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 special needs.

1.2 Inclusive assessment arrangements are intended to reduce the adverse effects of a candidate’s special needs when demonstrating his or her level of attainment. The special arrangements requested for a candidate must not give that candidate an advantage in any assessment component.

1.3 The inclusive 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 arrangements are necessary for a candidate during the course of their study of the DP 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 center is mandatory. Similarly, if a DP candidate has difficulties meeting the requirements for creativity, action, service (CAS), IB Answers must be consulted.

1.5 The IB aims to authorize 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 the 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 arrangement policy of the IB may not reflect the standard of any one country. To achieve equity among candidates with assessment access requirement, the policy represents the results 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 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.
International Baccalaureate Principles cont.

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.

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 a conflict of interest.
SEN Terminology

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

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

**Learning Support requirements** – Support 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 special assessment arrangements may display the characteristics of one or more of the following special educational needs.

- Autism/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
Roles & Responsibilities

Responsibilities of the School

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

Responsibilities of the IB Coordinator

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

Responsibilities 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 or IB coordinator as needed.
Roles & Responsibilities cont.

Responsibilities of the Faculty cont.

- The classroom teacher will implement the appropriate interventions as outlined in the Multi-Tier Support System.
- The classroom teacher will maintain accurate records of students’ progress.
- The classroom teacher with the assistance of the exceptional student services facilitator and a counselor will become familiar with the special needs of the exception student.
- The classroom teacher will provide differentiated instructions as outlined by the students’ IEP or 504 Plan.
- The teacher will maintain discretion and confidentiality in providing special education needs 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 special education needs.
- Parents will communicate with the school regarding any changes in their child’s special education needs.
- Parents will make a request for needed child studies and services from the school or school 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 an active participant in classes and meetings.
Special Needs Policy Committee:

Jaclyn Veldhuis – Assistant Principal Curriculum

Timothy Sinclair– ESE Staffing Specialist

Cynthia Matthews – Guidance Director

Tracy Krencik – MYP Language A Teacher

Carol Kuhn – IB Coordinator

*This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure that it is updated to reflect current IB and school policies.
References and Resources

Candidates with special assessment needs, IBO, 2011.
Candidates with special access requirements, IBO, 2013.
Meeting student learning diversity in the classroom, IBO, 2013.
Special Education Needs Policy, Cocoa Beach Jr. Sr. High School. 2014.