



# 2019-2020 Southside Middle School IB World School MYP Inclusion Policy



## **Rationale**

The Southside Middle School faculty and staff believe that all students are deserving of a quality education and understand that some students have special educational needs and may need additional support or encouragement to ensure they are able to reach their full potential. In accordance with this belief, we employ an inclusion model and follow all guidelines set forth by IDEA, ADA, and NCLB.

Inclusion describes the principle that all students are entitled to equitable access to learning, achievement, and the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of their educational program. Therefore, all students with special educational needs are full participants in the learning community, and the IB program is applied equally across the school for all students at all levels. Through the use of an integrated multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) students of all levels are able to receive the supports and scaffolds needed to ensure their academic and social success while at SMS.

## **Organization**

In order to fully support the educational and emotional needs of our students, SMS has a team of Exceptional Student Education (ESE) teachers and support facilitators who provide guidance and additional support as needed. The ESE lead is a fully released teacher who dedicates time to ensuring that the Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and 504 Plans are not only compliant with state and federal requirements but also adequately address the educational, behavioral, and social needs of each student. This person is also in charge of scheduling and conducting annual reviews of IEPs and 504 Plans with parents, students, teachers, and counselors. All members of the SMS staff are provided with copies of student accommodations and are consulted for input on student progress toward goals set forth in IEPs and 504 Plans.

In order to provide sufficient scaffolded support for students struggling in math and reading, SMS has a dedicated Reading Coach, Math Coach, Reading Interventionist, and Math Interventionist. This team of fully released teachers work together with classroom teachers to provide additional supports as needed based on individual student data. The Reading Coach and Math Coach work with teachers to incorporate various scaffolding strategies making sure content is acquirable by all students.

Per state requirements, all teachers receive professional development geared toward meeting the needs of students with varying exceptionalities. These courses are provided by state and district programs free of charge to the teachers and count as hours toward recertification.

## **Identification**

Students may be identified for exceptional student education services through either parent request or teacher recommendation. If parents feel a student needs additional

supports through ESE services, they can request the student be evaluated through the monthly MRT (Multidisciplinary Resource Team) meetings. The team will begin the RTI (Response to Intervention) process and evaluation to see if the student qualifies for one of the ESE programs. This could include a speech screening by a speech and language pathologist or a cognitive evaluation by a school psychologist depending on the area of need. In addition, data regarding student performance and peer comparisons will be collected and analyzed, as part of the RTI process. Interventions will be put in place and monitored for effectiveness. After all evaluations have been completed, the MRT will meet again with the parent to decide if the student meets the criteria for the ESE program and begin the next steps.

If a teacher believes a student could benefit from additional supports, he/she may initiate the RTI process by collecting data, implementing specific interventions and tracking how the student. The teacher will then refer the student to the MRT, at which point, the MRT will meet with parents and discuss if they would like to consent to further, more in depth evaluations to see if the student qualifies for one of the ESE programs. If consent is given, the student will receive the appropriate evaluations. After all evaluations have been completed, the MRT will meet again with the parent to decide if the student meets the criteria for the ESE program and begin the next steps.

### **Placement**

The placement of students with exceptional education needs is determined by the IEP team including service providers, evaluation interpreter(s), the Local Education Agency, exceptional education teacher(s), general education teacher(s), parent(s), and student, when appropriate. The student will be integrated into the mainstream classroom to the extent determined appropriate by the team. However, this does not preclude the use of exceptional education placement when determined appropriate to meet the student's educational needs. Southside's population also includes students found eligible under Section 504 who may receive accommodations per their Individualized Accommodation Plan so they can appropriately access their education.

### **Planning & Instruction**

The school will ensure that an Individual Education Plan (IEP) is designed to meet the student's needs with parental input. The IEP identifies the student's individual needs, goals, and priorities for learning and is developed by the team. The student's IEP will be reviewed at least once a year, and the student will be reevaluated tri-annually. Students utilizing exceptional education services will be assessed against the same criteria as students not utilizing ESE services, according to the IB MYP guidelines. However, accommodations are provided for students requiring them as indicated in the IEP. Such accommodations may include extended time for assessments, use of scaffolding materials, and manner of assessment delivery, for example, hearing instructions for an assessment versus reading instructions. Some students must receive additional support within the school day per their IEP and are enrolled in Learning Strategies for 90 minutes every other day. Learning Strategies supports students daily in the development of the six approaches to learning skills categories. Typically, these students do not take a language acquisition course; however, guidance works with each family to determine the best schedule for the student.

Teachers incorporate a variety of instructional strategies, including gradual release of responsibility model and explicit instruction techniques, in order to make the curriculum

accessible to **all** students. When planning instruction, teachers are required to document specific accommodations provided to students with IEPs in their lesson plans. These individual accommodations are most typically present during differentiated instruction when the teacher is able to work with students in a small group. General education teachers and exceptional education teachers work together to ensure every student is able to achieve their educational goals.

### **Progress Monitoring**

Regardless of IEP or 504 status, all students with data reflecting a deficit in reading or mathematics will receive a Performance Monitoring Plan where progress toward making growth on the state standards can be tracked and interventions prescribed and delivered can be documented. This plan includes student performances on district, teacher-made, and state assessments.

A Lack of Adequate Progress (LAP) meeting will take place any time a student with an IEP is not passing a course. The meeting will focus on examining the student's current goals and accommodations to ensure they meet the student's needs and determine whether adjustments need to be made to the IEP based on the student's performance. If it is determined that the lack of progress is due to the need for additional supports, then the IEP will be updated. If the lack of progress is not due to a lack of adequate supports, a plan will be created to help the student recover the grade and demonstrate the level of mastery necessary to pass the course.

### **Evaluating & Reporting**

Standards for all students, including students with special educational needs, are developed with high but appropriate expectations for student achievement. The school report card will contain information regarding student performance only. Accommodations received and progress toward goals are reported through the IEP or 504 plan and reviewed tri-annually as previously stated.

### **Conclusion**

At SMS, we aim to meet the academic, social, physical and emotional needs of all students through a variety of resources.