

Travis B. Bryan High School
International Baccalaureate
Special Educational Needs Policy

Philosophy

The philosophy of Travis B. Bryan High School's IB Diploma program aligns with that of the IBO, especially with regard to difference and diversity. The IB program is inclusive of all people, no matter the educational, socio-economic, or cultural background. Bryan ISD does not discriminate on the basis of gender, age, race, nationality, religion, disability, socioeconomic standing or non-proficiency in English language skills in providing educational services for students' benefits. Students are appropriately challenged by their learning, expectations of them are high but realistic, students belong to a community and feel cared for, trusted, understood, valued and safe. It is the philosophy that every child can learn and that every child should be provided with those creative, thinking and learning skills that will carry him/her to success as adults, making them self-sufficient citizens, caring, reflective, and productive members of society. Therefore, it is the IB Diploma Programme's vision, in the context of the learner-centered nature of IB instruction, that all students receive the necessary resources, guidance, accommodations, and differentiation needed to attain their highest level of personal success. (See Travis B. Bryan IB Admission Policy)

Objectives

It is the responsibility of the school to see that all special needs staff are adequately trained and have opportunities for ongoing professional development. The SEN policy at Travis B. Bryan High School supports the school community in aiming to achieve the following objectives:

- To ensure that students have maximum access to the whole curriculum according to their potential
- To ensure a shared responsibility in the school, by all the school professional staff to support the SEN policy at all levels of education
- To allow the SEN teacher(s) access to school decision making processes through all meetings held regarding each student's educational needs and programming
- To encourage and ensure that every instructor's curriculum is linked to and makes detailed reference to how their teaching and learning practice, assessment recording, reporting and curriculum area documents support children with Special Needs
- To encourage and ensure that professional staff provide equal opportunities for students with Special Needs in the classroom and in exam situations
- To ensure the SEN policy works toward goals related to the aims of the school
- To encourage staff to assume responsibility for the learning of all children in their class and to ensure the importance of maintaining high expectations for all students

- To ensure that support is related to the curriculum and to the student's Individualized Education and/or 504 Plans
- To encourage an agreement among staff on how a broad, balanced, relevant, and differentiated curriculum be taught in the classroom
- To encourage cooperative planning and teaching by all staff in support of the SEN policy
- To provide a climate of warmth and support in which pupil's self-confidence and self-esteem can grow and in which all pupils feel valued and are able to risk making mistakes without fear
- To identify, assess and provide support for pupils with SEN needs
- To develop collaborative relationships with outside professional agencies or skilled professionals

Identification, Assessment, and Provision

Bryan ISD provides special educational services to children with disabilities to meet their unique needs. These educational programs are provided in a variety of settings, including general education, in-class support, content mastery, special education classrooms, the student's home, or a hospital setting. The district also provides related services when required to access or support their special education program including, but not limited to: transportation, occupational and physical therapy, individual or group counseling, and a work-study program.

To qualify for special education, students must have been evaluated in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) of 2004, and meet disability condition criteria in at least one of the following areas:

- Speech Impairment
- Hearing Impairment (including deafness)
- Visual Impairment (including blindness)
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Autism
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Emotional Disturbance
- Intellectual Disability
- Other Health Impairment
- Specific Learning Disability
- Deaf-Blindness
- Multiple Disabilities
- Non categorical Early Childhood

Special education is offered at no cost to parents to meet the needs of an eligible child with a disability, including instruction conducted in the classroom, in the home, in hospitals and institutions, and in other settings, and instruction in physical education.

The instruction offered through special education has been changed in content, methodology, or delivery of instruction to address the unique needs of a child that will result from that child's disability and to ensure access of the child to the general curriculum, so that he or she can meet the educational standards within the jurisdiction of the public agency that apply to all children.

Identification and Support of SEN students

1. **Identification.** If a child is experiencing learning difficulties, the parent may contact the person listed at the end of this document to learn about the district's overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links students to a variety of support options, including referral for a special education evaluation. Students having difficulty in the regular classroom should be considered for tutorial, compensatory, and other academic or behavior support services that are available to all students including a process based on Response to Intervention (RTI). The implementation of RTI has the potential to have a positive impact on the ability of school districts to meet the needs of struggling students. Teachers, parents, or counselors who notice a gap in achievement and ability may refer a student for special education testing

2. **Testing.** At any time, a parent is entitled to make a written request for an evaluation to any school administrator or director of special education for special education services. Within 15 school days, the district must decide if the evaluation is needed. If the evaluation is needed, the parent will be notified and asked to provide informed written consent for the evaluation. The district must complete the evaluation and the report within 45 school days of the date the district receives the informed written consent. If the student is absent 3 or more days during the evaluation period, the district can extend the timeline by the number of days the student was absent. For students under 5 (as of 9/1) and not enrolled in public school and for students enrolled in private/home schools, initial evaluation must be completed no later than the 45th day after consent is obtained. If written consent is obtained between the last 44-35 days of the school year, the evaluation must be completed by June 30th. If the consent is obtained the last 34 days of school, the district has 45 school days to complete the evaluation. The district must give a copy of the evaluation report of the parent.

If the district determines that the evaluation is not needed, the district will provide the parent with prior written notice that explains why the child will not be evaluated. This written notice will include a statement that informs the parents of their rights, if they disagree with the district. The district is required to give parents the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards – Rights of Parents of Students with Disabilities*. Additional information regarding the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is available from the school district in a companion document, *A guide to the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Process*.

The following Web sites provide information to those who are seeking information and resources specific to students with disabilities and their families:

Texas Project First, at <http://www.texasprojectfirst.org>

Partners Resource Network, at <Http://www.partnerstx.org>

The Legal Framework for the Child Centered Process, at <http://framework.esc18.net>

The designated person to contact regarding options for a child experiencing learning difficulties or a referral for evaluation for special education services is Deborah Akin, Director of Special Education at (979) 209-2751.

3. Admission. If a student meets the necessary requirements for special education services an ARD (Admission, Review, and Dismissal) Committee meeting is held to discuss the student's evaluation and to develop a plan for providing support through either modifications of accommodations to the learning process. An Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a formal plan mandated by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This plan may be put into place upon identification of a school-based disability (e.g. Specific Learning Disability, Emotional Disability, Autism Disability, Speech/: Language Impairment etc.). This plan includes Special Education and related services that address goals and objectives for the student. All student needs are taken into consideration in the creation of the IEP. Most IEPs are initiated during primary or middle school years, and secondary educators are provided information regarding classroom needs and accommodations upon high school enrollment.

4. Modifications. The appropriate modifications/accommodations for the student are put in place to provide support. These are communicated to the teachers. They can range from preferential seating to a pull-out program depending on the needs of the student.

5. Review. A yearly review of the student's program is conducted. This review is held as a formal ARD meeting. Informal status checks are conducted on a six weeks basis or as needed through progress reports, report cards, and case managers reports.

6. Dismissal. Students can be dismissed from the program through the ARD process.

7. Support. Classroom teachers are encouraged to work with the students in the least restrictive environment, providing classroom support for the students.

504

In addition to the services described above, a student may receive monitoring and support services through the 504 program. A 504 plan refers to Section 594 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act, which specifies that no one with a disability can be excluded from participating in federally funded programs or activities, including elementary, secondary, or post secondary schooling. This plan identifies modifications and/or accommodations needed for a student to allow him/her to have the opportunity to perform at the same level as peers. Teachers and parents are allowed to recommend students to a school-based problem solving team to explore the appropriateness of a 504

plan. This is a program that can also be used to support students who have a temporary situation, i.e. a broken arm. Because these situations require fewer accommodations, several IB students have received support through 504.

RTI Plan

Response to Intervention (RTI) is a multi-tier approach to the early identification and support of students with learning and behavior needs. RTI helps the school staff put into action a plan for students who are experiencing learning or emotional-behavioral difficulties. Teachers traditionally recommend students for the RTI referral process, but parents may also request a review. Through one or more RTI meetings, the teaching and professional staff determine what accommodations and interventions should be put into place to provide the student an opportunity to perform in class at the same level as their peers. This plan should include strong Tier I (Universal) interventions, utilization of any necessary SIOP strategies and positive behavior support. The parents and student are included in the process of identifying needs and solutions that best suit the student. RTI has been adopted by all schools in the Bryan School District, and is federally mandated nationwide.

Situations that require changes to the IB testing situation follow the procedures outlined in the Special Needs document.

IB Assessments

The IBO and Bryan High School believe that all candidates should be allowed to demonstrate their ability under assessment conditions that are as fair as possible. Standard assessment conditions may put candidates with learning support requirements at a disadvantage by preventing them from demonstrating their level of attainment. So, inclusive assessment arrangements may be authorized by the IBO in these circumstances. This policy applies to candidates with long-term or permanent challenges. Candidates affected by temporary medical challenges (for example, injury resulting in loss of mobility), will be submitted by the coordinator at a later time in accordance with the procedures outlined in the *Handbook of procedures for the Diploma Programme*. (Candidates with assessment access requirements, IBO, July 2014)

Candidates who require inclusive assessment arrangements may have 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 learning and assessment) 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

All inclusive arrangements that may be authorized by the IB are based on the following principles.

- 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.
- The arrangements are intended to reduce the adverse effects of a candidate's long-term challenges when demonstrating his or her level of attainment. The arrangements for a candidate must not give that candidate an advantage in any assessment component.
- The assessment arrangements are intended for candidates with the aptitude to meet all assessment requirements leading to the award of the diploma or course results.
- The IB aims to authorize inclusive assessment arrangements that are compatible with those normally available to the candidate concerned. Coordinators are required to provide information on the candidate's usual method of working in the classroom
- The IB treats all information about a candidate as confidential. The IB does not flag or annotate in any way the results of a candidate for whom inclusive assessment arrangements have been authorized
- The 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 made.

Examples of Inclusive Assessment Arrangements for IB Assessments Include:

- **Access to Modified Papers**
 - Exam papers in braille
 - Changes to print on exam papers
 - Printing on colored paper
 - Modifications to the visual complexity
 - Modifications to the language of exam papers
- **Access to additional time based on the standard score on the psychological test**
- **Access to writing**
 - Computers
 - Word Processor
 - Word processor with spell checker
 - Speech recognition software
 - Scribes
 - Transcriptions
- **Access to reading**
 - Reader
 - Reading software

- **Access to speech and communication**
 - Communicators
 - Augmentative communication device
- **Access to calculators and practical assistance**

Responsibilities of the School

- In practice, all of the students identified as special education have already been identified prior to their enrollment in IB courses and their documentation has been transferred from the middle school to the high school to the special education department
- The school will provide guidance and information so that students with special needs can make informed decisions concerning application to the IB Diploma Program
- Students with learning support requirements may need support and arrangements teaching and learning, as well as assessment. Once a student with SEN is enrolled in the program, the student will meet with the Diploma Coordinator to design a program of courses suitable for the student, with regard to SEN of the student
- The IB Counselor, School Psychologist or Special education case manager will provide the IB Coordinator and teachers with all IEP's and/or 504 plan documentation. all information regarding a Special Needs student is kept confidential.
- Special education case managers and/or school counselors will provide updates and host meetings for updates in IEP's and 504 plans. The IB coordinator will be invited to these meetings.
- Teachers are responsible to differentiate the curriculum, lessons, and assessment without reducing the depth or breadth of the content. The following are some of the methods that can be used to meet the student's academic needs --preferential seating, notes provided by the teacher or another student, extended time on tests and on assignments, oral administration of tests, use of a calculator or dictionary, and testing in a smaller group setting. (See Travis B. Bryan IB Assessment Policy)
- Teachers attend annual professional development sessions on various differentiation techniques and are provided with a copy of *Meeting student learning diversity in the classroom*, a publication of the International Baccalaureate Program, United Kingdom, IBO, May 2013.
- Specific Dyslexia Curriculum Support. Once a student with dyslexia is identified, preferential status and state law requires intervention. The following supports are already in place and students stay in these programs until they meet mastery as determined by the standards of the program.:
 - **System 44** is an effective, foundational reading program for Bryan ISD secondary dyslexic students. A combination of software based and teacher-led instruction provides the student with adaptive, individualized learning as well as teacher-mediated direct instruction.
 - **Read 180** is an online reading intervention program raising reading achievement for struggling, dyslexic readers.

- Before requests for SEN assessments are made, arrangements will be discussed with the student, the candidate's parents, his/her teachers, the coordinator, and the head of school
- Before submitting documentation to the IB Assessment centre, the school will obtain consent from the candidate or the candidate's legal guardian.
- The school will make all arrangements for SEN accommodations in accordance with IB regulations, including approving and appointing a scribe, reader, prompter, practical assistance/aide or communicator, and any assistive technology that may be required.
- The IB Coordinator will familiarize the candidate of the SEN arrangements.
- For anticipated and retake candidates, authorizations for inclusive assessment arrangements for a candidate are applicable to all future exam sessions
- The SEN policy is posted on the IB Diploma Program website for Bryan High School

Responsibilities of the Student/Legal Guardian

- Inform the coordinator about their SEN (preferably prior to the junior year).
- Requests for inclusive assessment arrangement should be made by October 1, prior to the year the student is testing to the coordinator
- To submit requests for access arrangements, two forms of supporting documentation are required to be uploaded to the online application. The student will provide (1) a psychological report/psycho-educational/medical report from a psychological or medical service and (2) educational evidence from the school.
- **The psychological report/psycho-educational/medical report must:**
 - Have been undertaken no earlier than the previous academic year before the start of the candidate's study of the Diploma Program.
 - Be legible, on paper with a letterhead, signed and dated
 - State the title, name and professional credentials of the person (or persons) who has undertaken the evaluation and diagnosis of the candidate
 - State specifically the nature of the learning support requirement, and the tests or techniques used to arrive at the identification
 - Be based on the candidate's performance on nationally standardized psychological tests (where available and published, recent editions of standardized tests should be employed)
 - Report results as standard scores, which have a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 15, and not percentile or age/grade equivalents
 - Be based on the candidate's learning support requirements. It is not mandatory to test in all areas. For example, if a student with learning support requirements only has difficulties in writing for which the school provides the use of speech recognition software, then the psychological report need not contain standard scores in reading and mathematics.
- **Educational evidence can be:**
 - a letter/observational report from the coordinator or candidate's teachers outlining any difficulties which may be apparent in class plus a brief summary

about the arrangements provided to the candidate in order to access learning and assessment.

- A detailed individualized educational plan for the student or a sample of work done under timed conditions without the assessment arrangements that are being requested (for example without the use of additional time/word processor).

Responsibility of the Coordinator

- Meet with the student and their guardian to give careful consideration to whether suitable arrangements can be made within the IB curriculum and determine the appropriate selection of coursework based on the student's SEN
- Ensure that teachers are aware of the accommodations and how these work within the framework of the IB program
- Provide copies of the document entitled, *Candidates with assessment access requirements*, to all SEN students and their teachers and the SEN policy for the IB program at Bryan High School.
- Compile the necessary documentation and submit online to IB six months prior to an exam session. That is by November 15 for candidates registering for May exams.
- The coordinator must justify that assessment arrangements are necessary for the current assessment. For this reason, the medical report must have been undertaken no earlier than the previous academic year before the start of the candidate's study of the Diploma Program.
- The coordinator will notify the candidate and teachers about the decision by IBO regarding inclusive assessments

Responsibility of Counselors

Counselors represent the student's best interests at the ARD (Admission, Review, and Dismissal) meeting and during the school year in meetings with teachers and parents.

Responsibility of Administration

Assistant Principals lead the annual ARD meetings, acting as the representative of the school district.

Responsibility of the Diagnostician

The diagnostician does the initial testing, completes the paperwork and makes sure the local, state, and national guidelines are being met.

Bryan ISD Contact Information

Bryan ISD Special Education Department
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Policy Review

IB Coordinator, IB Counselor, Secondary Coordinator of Special Education, and the Associate Principal will meet after the May IB exam session to review the SEN policy to ensure that it remains a work in progress, keeping up to date with the needs of the student population and in line with learning needs legislation to recommend any necessary changes.

Documents Utilized in the Preparation of this Policy

Approaches to Teaching and Learning in the Diploma Programme, a publication of the International Baccalaureate Programme, United Kingdom: IBO, April 2015.

Bryan High School Admissions Policy

Bryan High School Assessment Policy

Bryan High School Language Policy

Bryan ISD School Board Policy

Candidates with assessment access requirements, a publication of the International Baccalaureate Programme, United Kingdom: IBO, July 2014.

Meeting student learning diversity in the classroom, a publication of the International Baccalaureate Program, United Kingdom, IBO, May 2013.

SEN Policies of Westwood High School and HEB School District

The Diploma Programme: From Principles into Practice, a publication of the International Baccalaureate Organization, United Kingdom: IB Publishing, April 2015.

Policy Determination

The SEN policy was determined by guidelines of the board of education and the IBO. The IB Coordinator, Advanced Academic Coordinator, the 504 Coordinator, the Dyslexia Coordinator, the Secondary Coordinator of Special education, and a special education teacher had a part in developing the SEN policy for Travis B. Bryan High School.

SEN Policy Last updated Fall 2015