

This comprehensive policy contains aspects which apply to the North-Palmer Middle Years program as well as to the Palmer Diploma program. Please note commonalities as well as relevant distinctions.



Philosophy and Purpose of the IB Inclusion Policy

In the publication *Learning diversity in the International Baccalaureate programmes* (2010), the IB states, "Inclusion is an ongoing process that aims to increase access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers. This can only be successfully achieved in a culture of collaboration, mutual respect, support and problem solving. Inclusion is the learner profile in action, an outcome of dynamic learning communities."

In keeping with this, the faculties at Palmer High School and North Middle School recognize and appreciate that every student is an individual with unique personal and educational needs. We strive to ensure that all students receive the necessary support to allow them to achieve academic success and reach their full potential as they progress through the IB Middle Years Programme (IB MYP) and, as may be the case, into the IB Diploma (IB DP) Programme at Palmer.

The North Middle and Palmer High School's Special Education Needs (SEN)/Inclusion Policy provides that all students enrolled in the IB-MYP and DP programs receive meaningful and equitable access to the curriculum and to an appropriate education and/or enrichment that affords them the opportunity to achieve their fullest personal potential. This rationale is supported by our mission statements. The Palmer High School Mission Statement includes: "*William J. Palmer High School is dedicated to pursuing academic excellence and, in partnership with the community, preparing our diverse student population for responsible and productive lives.*" The North Mission Statement includes: "*North Middle School students will be productive and successful citizens. We hold our students to high standards so that they will set goals, think for themselves, problem-solve and take responsibility for their own learning. We will fulfill our collective responsibility to reach and teach all students by building a collaborative and professional climate.*" as well as the Colorado Springs School District 11 Mission Statement: "*School District 11 is meeting the demands of the 21st century by delivering personalized learning for every student, every day, in every classroom.*" Finally, in its efforts to clearly define the scope of inclusion, District #11 includes the following statement within its non-discrimination policy: "The Colorado Springs School District 11 Board of Education (the Board) is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination in relation to disability, race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation,

transgender status, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, religion, ancestry, age, and protected activity. Colorado Springs School District 11 (the District) values the diversity of the family, and of the social and cultural backgrounds of the students, parents/guardians, and personnel who participate in its programs and activities.”

This document will be reviewed every four years and during years in which a self-study is conducted.

Access to Colorado Springs School District-11's IB Middle Years and Diploma Programmes

North Middle School and Palmer High School offer full access to an IB MYP education to all students. Subject areas offer a range of MYP classes at remedial, grade level and accelerated/honors levels, and students work closely with guidance counselors to develop course schedules designed to fulfill their academic plans. Palmer High School provides access to the IB Diploma program without application to those students who complete the IB Middle Years at the Honors level. Subject areas include offerings in all six recognized IB DP Subject Groups, including Higher and Standard level offerings in all groups except Language and Literature, allowing students to tailor their DP experience to capitalize on academic strengths and interests.

As part of the development of IB classes, the following expectations constitute “best practices” in developing classroom curriculum:

- Active development of the student at the center of learning through the IB learner profile (MYP/DP)
- Units of inquiry that include concepts, global contexts and questions to guide learning (MYP)
- Explicit instruction of critical approaches to learning skills (MYP/DP)
- Advanced planning of differentiation strategies (MYP)
- Assessment strategies that enhance learning and inform instruction; aligned summative tasks to assist with standardization and formative assessments (DP)

Learning Support

Students receive learning support in a wide variety of ways. Within the classroom, instructional support is embedded throughout the lesson in observance with the following four principles of best practices:

- A. Affirming identity and building self-esteem

- B. Valuing prior knowledge
- C. Scaffolding instruction
- D. Extending learning for students ready for enrichment

In addition, the following list outlines layers of intervention in place outside the classroom to support student learning and success:

At North Middle School:

1. Teacher teams meet for "Kid Talk" to discuss students as it relates to academic, attendance, social-emotional and/or behavioral issues. Teachers then develop formal or informal plans to support the student. If increased supports are needed, then the student may move forward to RtI and/or PST
2. RtI uses a multi-tiered system to provide students support for learning ranging from typical classroom instruction (Tier I) to intense progress monitoring and diagnostic assessment (Tier II).
3. Problem-Solving Team (PST) addresses student placement and scheduling.
4. AVID class (a) and AVID-embedded strategies (b) in all classes offer the opportunity for students to develop and enhance their learning skills.
 - a. AVID tutorial offers students the opportunity to develop academic language, habits of mind and study skills
 - b. WICOR and Cornell Notes are utilized in all classes
5. Tutorials are offered in reading, writing and math.
6. Before and after school clubs offer both academic support and enrichment opportunities.

At Palmer High School:

1. A culture of behavioral accountability based on restorative practices
 - a. The use of restorative practices is fundamental to the culture of Palmer High School. The Palmer faculty emphasizes the importance of taking responsibility for one's actions through respectful dialogue as a means for conflict resolution.
 - b. Restorative practices promote honest dialogue, understanding, reparation of harm and inclusion rather than punishment and isolation when conflict occurs.
2. AVID tutorial and AVID-embedded strategies in classroom instruction
 - a. **"AVID's mission is to close the achievement gap by preparing all students for college readiness and success in a global society."**

- b. During AVID tutorial, students develop academic language, habits of mind and specific study skills that help them navigate any academic environment
3. Response to Intervention strategies
 - a. Learning intervention through personalized instruction in building wide math and writing tutoring centers. Using peer tutors and community volunteers, these student learning centers provide learning support for all levels of instruction on an individual or small-group basis each period of the day and after school.
 - b. In the Diploma program, a part-time interventionist supports students in completing the Extended Essay.
 - c. Palmer High School recognizes that behavior can also interrupt student success academically and socially and therefore has proactive interventions in place that promote positive relations, self-control and self-advocacy in overcoming behavioral problems. A "Behavior Intervention Team" works to ensure that students receive the coaching, structure and redirection needed for successful inclusion in a classroom setting.
4. Teacher office hours
 - a. Teachers make time available for student help during planning periods and by appointment to meet student schedules.

For students who qualify for additional learning help, the following support services are available:

- Special Education with accommodations and/or modifications as outlined through the 504 or IEP process
- English Language Learning with classroom instruction, accommodations and/or modifications necessary to support student learning in a language other than mother-tongue
- Gifted and Talented Resources with access to and support for success in accelerated classes and academic enrichment opportunities

Federal and state legislation governing inclusion:

District 11 schools operate in full compliance with the following federal, state and local requirements in delivering special education services to students who qualify:

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

- Outline requirements for educating students with disabilities to include identification, evaluation, funding, discipline, monitoring and enforcement related of the Individual Education Program. <http://idea.ed.gov/>

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

Forbids organizations from excluding or denying individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to receive program benefits and services. It defines the rights of individuals with disabilities to participate in, and have access to, program benefits and services.

<http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/civilrights/resources/factsheets/504.pdf>

Exceptional Children's Educational Act (ECEA)

Outlines the rules associated with special education and gifted programming.

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/sites/default/files/documents/spedlaw/download/ecearules-march2013.pdf> (11)

CSSD 11 Board of Education policies governing inclusion and non-discrimination:

All D11 BOE policies can be found at <http://www.d11.org/BOE/Policies/Pages/default.aspx>

AC: Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity

Respect for the dignity and worth of each individual shall be a consideration in the establishment of all policies by the D11 board and in the administration of those policies by the administration.

IHBA: Special Education Programs for Students with Educational Disabilities

D11 shall provide educational opportunities to all resident students in accordance with the requirements of state and federal law

IHBAA and IHBAA-R: Response to Intervention (RtI)

RtI is an instructional framework that promotes a well-integrated system that is matched to students' academic, social-emotional and behavioral needs. RtI uses screening, problem solving, progress monitoring and evaluation based on data and evidence-based instructional and behavioral support strategies

IHBB: Gifted and Talented Education

D11 will serve all gifted and talented students with special provision to meet their educational needs from kindergarten through graduation

IHBEA: English as a Second Language

D11 shall provide suitable instructional programs for all students whose dominant language is other than English as outlined by the CO Department of Education

JKD-JKE-2: Disciplining of Students with Disabilities

The D11 Student Conduct, Attendance and Discipline Code applies to all students and can be applied to students with disabilities except in the case where a student is being removed from school. Removal of a student with disabilities must follow requirements outlined in IDEA, ECEA of CO, and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

EEAB and EEAB-R: Special Needs Student Transportation

D11 shall provide transportation services to students who have transportation specified as part of their Individualized Education Plan (IEP)

Resources

To ensure that all students can access the MYP at North and Palmer and that MYP Honors students may successfully transition into the IB Diploma program, resources must be allocated to enhance teaching and learning for the diverse student population found at both schools including staffing and budgetary support. Staffing and budgetary support is determined at the district level and is based on the number of students requiring special services and what type of services are needed. In general, each school receives an annual allocation of full-time employees (FTE) which includes special education staffing coordinators, special education teachers, gifted resource teachers, English Language Learner teachers and educational assistants.

In addition to staffing and budgetary support, the professional team at North and Palmer also access a series of tools which are used to determine eligibility for services and progress monitoring. These tools include

- Attendance, academic and discipline history
- Response to Intervention (RtI) plans
- Formal and informal observations
- Standardized assessment data
 - Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)
 - Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)
 - CMAS (Colorado Measure of Academic Success)
 - Target assessments such as Test of Written Language (TOWL) and Comprehensive Math Abilities Test (CMAT)
 - Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)
 - World class instructional design and assessment (WIDA)

Definition of Key Terms

The following glossary provides working definitions of critical terms used in this policy:

- **Inclusion and inclusive education:** the concept of inclusion is central to all interactions within the MYP community. Inclusive practices acknowledge a broad understanding of the diversity that exists within our community and moves beyond that acknowledgement to

actively embrace that diversity and establish a sense of belonging for all individuals. An inclusive school community is defined by its culture of collaboration, mutual respect, dynamic systems of support and problem-solving.

- **Dynamic learning communities:** all references to school or learning communities include the voices of all learners, their parents/guardians, certified and support staff as well as community members invested in our schools.
- **Accommodations:** “Accommodations: are changes in course content, teaching strategies, standards, test presentation, location, timing, scheduling, expectations, student responses, environmental structuring, and/or other attributes which provide access for a student with a disability to participate in a course/standard/test, which **DO NOT fundamentally alter or lower the standard or expectations of the course/standard/test.** (Wright)
 - Examples of accommodations may include extending the time allowed for a test or an assignment, providing a distraction-free environment, providing a paraprofessional or peer assistant,.
- **Modifications** are changes in course content, teaching strategies, standards, test presentation, location, timing, scheduling, expectations, student responses, environmental structuring, and/or other attributes which provide access for a student with a disability to participate in a course/standard/test, which **DO fundamentally alter or lower the standard or expectations of the course/standard/test.** (Wright)
 - Examples of modifications may include reducing or expanding the number of items a student is expected to complete, changing the format of the products created, for example drawing an illustration of a concept rather than writing an essay.
 - In general, modifications are made when the expectations lie beyond the capabilities of the student

Transition Services: MYP (North to Palmer) and MYP to DP (Palmer)

North Middle School and Palmer High School work in collaboration to ensure that MYP students make a smooth transition from middle school to high school academically and socially. Eighth grade students have multiple opportunities to learn about academic options and extra-curricular opportunities through information sessions, evening Open Houses, school visits by guidance counselors and letters home. As the freshmen year begins, Palmer “Link Crew” volunteers host incoming freshmen for an orientation day that includes team-building exercises, tours of the school and help with logistical details such as locating and opening lockers. In addition to the

broad transition opportunities offered to all students, those students identified with IEPs, ELL plans and/or ALPs receive additional support with the transition from North to Palmer. Eighth grade students with an IEP visit Palmer for a tour and meeting with the special education staff at the high school in addition to the Palmer staff visiting North to conduct classroom visits to both formally and informally observe students. ELL plans and ALPs are transferred electronically with both formal and informal discussions occurring between the staff and the two schools.

Students opting to enter the IB Diploma program after completing MYP Honors are oriented to the new demands of the DP through formal induction in the spring. Induction includes a review of the IB Diploma program core requirements (the Extended Essay; Creativity, Activity, and Service; Theory of Knowledge), as well as support resources available to them as described elsewhere in this policy.

For students with specific academic support plans such as Individual Education Plans (I.E.P.s), Advanced Learning Plans (A.L.P.s), 504 plans and English Language Learning plans, the following processes are in place to communicate these needs as efficiently as possible in order to avoid disruption of learning services as students move from middle to high school:

- North and Palmer work within full compliance of state and federal law in the development of Individual Education Plans (IEPs). Every student on an IEP has a case manager that oversees the implementation of the plan, the annual review as well as the plan re-evaluation every three years. Case managers are assigned according to student need with a specialist in the department.
- North utilizes the Special Education team and the Staffing Coordinator to facilitate development and evaluation of IEPs with input from parents. ELL plans are also created in a similar fashion. Advanced Learning Plans (ALPs) however are created by the students with support from the Gifted Resource teacher (GRT) and then approved by the parent.
- Palmer offers a continuum of services to meet IEP needs from full inclusion in mainstream classrooms to a range of special education support classes. Palmer High School special education teachers attend spring IEP reviews at North Middle School in effort to shape the transition from middle to high school, meet the student and family and proactively prepare for the arrival of each student requiring learning support.

Students entering the Diploma program with Individual Education Plans (I.E.P.s), Advanced Learning Plans (A.L.P.s), 504 plans and English Language Learning plans, have requirements for specific modifications and accommodations communicated clearly to their new teachers. Plans

carrying over from year to year (or program to program) are reviewed and revised as required on an annual basis. The IB Diploma program coordinator reviews all special needs learning plans with the IB Counselor to determine whether IB needs to be contacted to make a “request for inclusive assessment arrangements” via the IB Information System (IBIS).

Requests for inclusive assessment arrangements in the Diploma Program

Students admitted into the IB Diploma program with students Individual Education Plans (I.E.P.s), Advanced Learning Plans (A.L.P.s), 504 plans and/or English Language Learning plans will have such plans reviewed by the IB Diploma Coordinator in consultation with the IB Counselor. As a result, the IB Diploma Coordinator may contact the IB via IBIS to make a request for inclusive assessment arrangements. As per IB requirements, “a psychological/psycho-educational document is mandatory for all access requirements necessitated due to specific learning difficulties. A medical document is mandatory for all access requirements necessitated due to medical, or psychological issues. Educational evidence is required for all requests” (IB Information Systems, “Request for Inclusive Assessment Arrangements,” accessed October 8, 2015). Students and/or their parents/guardians must provide the IB Diploma Coordinator with all needed documentation by November 10 in order to process the request by the IB’s stated deadline of November 15 for the May session. Ordinarily, requests made and accepted on behalf of an anticipated candidate (i.e., IB junior) will carry over into the senior year without the need to complete another official request. All decisions regarding granting inclusive assessment arrangements are made by the IB, not Palmer High School staff.

Bibliography

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