

## IDEA College Preparatory Donna International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme Inclusion Policy

IDEA College Preparatory (ICP) Donna recognizes that teaching, learning and assessment are fundamentally interdependent. We are guided by the understanding that students have different learning styles, cultural experiences, expectations and needs. We believe that our job is to ensure that all students are provided with the necessary opportunities to succeed academically. To that end, our school recognizes the wide spectrum of needs and abilities along the educational continuum. We implement inclusion and ensure that all students are placed in a least restrictive environment to support and facilitate their learning process.

### Our Mission Statement

IDEA College Preparatory Donna is rewriting the story of underprivileged communities by creating a positive learning environment that equips students with the academic, social and leadership skills and international mindedness that are required to succeed in college and our global society.

### IB Mission Statement

The International Baccalaureate Organization aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. To this end the IBO works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programs of international education and rigorous assessment. These programs encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

Our general education curriculum is designed to provide all of our students with the highest level of instruction. Subsequently, we do not provide a different Gifted and Talented curriculum as our curriculum satisfies, and often supersedes, such expectation. From that highest track, we accommodate and differentiate for the lower levels of achievement.

ICP Donna believes in supporting all our students, including those with special educational needs. Individual needs may include, but are not limited to learning disabilities, autism, spectrum disorders; and/or physical, sensory, medical or mental health issues.

### Definitions

**Special Educational Needs**—refers to the need of extra support that students show beyond the general curriculum.

**Inclusion**—refers to providing access to all components of the IB program for all students. Specifically, Special needs students receive the support of a Special Educational Needs teacher in their general education classes.

**Differentiation**—refers to an instructional approach implemented to meet individual needs. It includes accommodations done through grouping, pacing, and resources among others.

### General Procedures

In the classroom, ICP Donna teachers:

- Differentiate and accommodate instruction to suit the student's individual learning needs.
- Provide extra support for students with special needs, as stipulated in their Individual Education Plan (IEP).
- Provide opportunities for individualized student enrichment.



## **Special Educational Needs Support, Services, and Procedures**

IDEA Public Schools offers Special Education Services in accordance with The Individual and Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Family Educational and Privacy Rights Act. IDEA Public Schools Special Programs teams support campuses in extending and improving learning opportunities for the diverse learners and/or students with disabilities in accordance with the state, federal and local policy and procedures.

IDEA Public Schools has the responsibility of identifying, locating, and evaluating individuals with disabilities who are 5 to 21 years of age and who fall within the school's jurisdiction. Special educational needs services are specifically designed to meet the unique needs of students with disabilities. Each student who receives special educational needs services has an Individual Education Plan (IEP), which is developed by the student's Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) Committee. The supplementary aids, and/or services that are necessary for the student to participate in the general curriculum are included in this plan. These services are annually reviewed and revised, when necessary.

All special educational needs services are provided in the least restrictive environment, which may be special educational needs settings, general education settings, or a combination. All students receiving special educational needs services are educated to the maximum extent appropriate along with their non-disabled peers. They also participate in all school activities in the same capacity.

### **Statement of Confidentiality and Conduct**

All information concerning a student with disabilities is confidential and may not be discussed with anyone except those who have a legitimate educational interest in the student with disabilities. Consistent with school board policy, persons participating in the ARD meeting will refrain from making any personal attacks on school staff, student or parents. All participants are expected to speak on a courteous manner and in a conversational tone. This expectation must be followed in order to facilitate a safe, collaborative environment focused on the development of appropriate educational plans for the student.

### **Assurances**

The ARD Committee assures that removal of students with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs if the nature of severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

The ARD Committee assures that each student with a disability participates in nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities, including meals, and recess periods, with nondisabled students to the maximum extent.

The ARD Committee ensures that to the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities, are educated with students who are nondisabled.

The Notice of Procedural Safeguards – Rights of Parents of Students with Disabilities, can be obtained from the Director of Special Programs or at the Texas Education Agency Special Education Website:

<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/special.ed/>. Please contact the IDEA Public Schools Director of Special Programs for more information about available programs, assessments, and services.

## Section 504

- No handicapped person qualified as such under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, shall, on the basis of handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity which receives federal financial assistance.
- ICP Donna does not discriminate on the basis of handicap in admission or access to, or treatment of employment in, its programs or activities subject to the Rehabilitation Act. A recipient of federal financial assistance that employs 15 or more persons shall designate at least one person to coordinate its efforts to comply with the requirements of the Rehabilitation Act. 34 CFR § 104.7
- A student with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, as defined by law, and who does not otherwise qualify for special education services may qualify for protections under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. When an evaluation is requested, a committee will be created to determine whether the student needs Section 504 services and supports in order to receive an appropriate education as required by federal law.

## Identification Process

If a student is not responding to specific strategies by an instructor, the following support procedures will be implemented:

- A child is identified by the teacher, parent, or concerned staff member.
- The student's name is submitted to the Response to Intervention Committee (The RTIC).
- The RTIC listens and provides recommended interventions for the teacher to try over several weeks.
- The teacher reconvenes with the RTIC to report on the student's progress.
- If necessary, further psycho-educational testing will be sought.
- After testing, and if necessary, the design and implementation of an IEP or 504 plan will take place and a meeting with the responsible parties will be held to discuss the program admission and intervention plan.
- If a student's needs are greater than what is provided on campus, alternative methods and strategies are implemented to satisfy the student's needs.
- The teachers of these students receive a copy of these plans, so accommodations are implemented in the classrooms.

## Support after Identification

- Every year, the Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) Committee meets to discuss the students' progress and to evaluate the recommendations for testing for that school year.
- While in the program, students receive individual support from Regular and Special Educational Needs teachers.
- Teachers use the student Individual Education Plan (IEP) to ensure his/her needs are met.
- Specific strategies such as small grouping, peer-tutoring/mentoring, change in pace, extra resources are implemented in the regular education classroom.

## Exit Process

Every year, the Admission, Review and Dismissal Committee meets to evaluate the student expected levels of growth and achievement. Once the student reaches on-grade level independent performance -after all support strategies have been put in place- the student is exited from the Special Educational Needs Program.

### **Support within the IB Classroom**

- The IB Coordinator meets with the student, parents, and teachers to discuss the necessary accommodations in accordance to the IEP.
- The teachers work with the student and parents concerning how the student's needs will be met in their individual classrooms and to decide on the best routes of communication for monitoring the student's progress.
- Teachers are expected to inform the IB Coordinator if problems or concerns arise.
- Students with special needs -who are not on grade level in Math and Reading- receive supplemental instruction from their Special Educational Needs teacher.
- Support offered by Special Educational Needs teachers is offered in all classes.
- Special Educational Needs teachers are trained at least once a year on Special Educational Needs guidelines and procedures.

### **IB Examination Accommodations**

Just like the IB, we believe that all candidates must be allowed to take their examinations under conditions that are as fair as possible. Where normal examination conditions and assessment procedures would put candidates at a disadvantage and prevent them from being able to demonstrate their skills and knowledge adequately, reasonable forms of accommodation may be authorized. (Handbook of Procedures for the Diploma Programme, 2014).

- The IB Coordinator informs the IB of individual student needs using the appropriate forms along with the required documentation.
- Once the IB Coordinator learns of the decision made by the IB, the student, parents, and teachers involved will be informed.



## **Responsibility of ICP Donna Stakeholders**

### **ICP School Staff**

ICP Donna will create a committee that will support all IB candidates receive an appropriate learning environment. Professional development is offered to the entire staff at Beginning of Year. Special Educational Needs teachers will further support IB teachers with additional support resources for students such as, individual trackers, visual aids, audio supplements, etc. Teachers actively participate in ARD meetings to create the best IEP for each candidate that requires this accommodation. Teachers will practice differentiation techniques to support all students, regardless of being in the special education program in their classrooms. Teachers and administrators will seek additional support from Special Education team such as the diagnostician, school psychologist, speech pathologist, and occupational therapist, academic counselor as student needs are determined. IB Coordinator will submit all updated documentation to the IB for inclusion arrangement approval with the collaboration of the ARD committee.

### **Students**

Students will be self-advocates for their learning experiences to ensure they are receiving the support that is needed for them to be successful. Students will reflect during their ARDs and 504 annual meetings and be active participants in the decisions being taken. Students will seek supplemental help from special educational needs teachers to close the achievement gap in their courses.

### **Parents**

ICP Donna Parents will be active participants in their child's developmental plan. Parents know their child and what learning techniques have shown the most progress for the candidate. Parents will suggest and implement new learning strategies to better support their child and be in constant communication with teachers, administrators and counsellors to advise on progress or regression.

### **Communication of Policy**

The IB policies are communicated with teaching faculty at the beginning of the academic year during professional development and included in data binders each year. Additionally, IB policies are communicated to all scholars during IB Culture Week the first two weeks of the academic year. All IB policies are available to teaching faculty, IB candidates and families at all times on the IDEA Donna IB website under "IB Policies" section.

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IB Diploma Programme Teachers 2024-2025