



## Inclusion/Special Education Policy

**Introduction and Rationale:** John W. North High School is committed to ensuring that *all* students are provided the support necessary to experience academic success and meet their full potential through participation in an inclusive approach to education that removes or reduces barriers.

In line with the International Baccalaureate learner profile of attributes that embody every IB World School (*IB learner profile, IBO, 2017*), our vision is for all students to graduate fully prepared and ready to engage in a global society. Our students are resilient advocates who actively work at making positive changes in their community through reflective and open-minded collaboration, problem-solving, and dynamic communication. They possess the attitude, knowledge, and skills that are required of autonomous individuals during ethical decision making. All students will have the academic preparation, college and career readiness, and social/emotional strategies to be successful in the post-secondary path of their choice.

This policy works in tandem with other policies ([Academic Integrity Policy](#), [Assessment Policy](#), [Admission to IB](#), [Language Policy](#)) governing the organization and collective physical and virtual educational environment at John W. North High School, an International Baccalaureate (IB) World School committed to *developing compassionate life-long learners who are college and career ready and will make a positive impact in a global society*.

In accordance with our mission and vision, we will work to provide a proactive, comprehensive, and developmentally appropriate program that addresses students' academic and career goals in addition to supporting their personal and social needs. In partnership with parents, guardians, community members, and other educators, our school counselors facilitate this support system to ensure all students at North become successful, responsible citizens and lifelong learners in a diverse and changing world.

This document seeks to:

- Outline the various accommodations and support mechanisms available to students and teachers, including those governed by the Riverside Unified School District and both state and Federal guidelines.

- Communicate to all stakeholders the school-wide and IB program expectations for creating and maintaining an inclusive educational environment for all learners as required by the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO).
- Provide direction and clear guidelines to stakeholders by defining appropriate vision, goals, and practice in the context of the IB Diploma Program at John W. North High School.

**Learning Diversity and Inclusion:** In IB World Schools, every student is entitled to meaningful and fair access to the curriculum. IB program principles emphasize that schools should be structured to embrace student diversity and honor individual differences. Embracing diversity and differences is crucial for fostering an international mindset, a core objective across all IB programs. Among educators, the ongoing effort to enhance access and engagement for all learners is recognized as inclusion. Inclusive education involves positively addressing each student's unique learning profile, including those with diverse learning needs. A key measure of inclusion in schools involves a shift from specialist teachers solely overseeing students with learning differences to collaborative planning among all educators involved in a student's educational journey.

John W. North High School provides opportunities for all students to be involved in programs offered at the school, including but not limited to California Partnership Academics, Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID), International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Program, athletics, academic English learner (AEL), and special education. John W. North creates a master schedule which includes options for 0 and 7<sup>th</sup> period courses, in addition to the normal 1-6 period school day, to meet the needs of our students. This enables the school to offer as many students as possible programs of their choice.

**Legal Obligations:** The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) is a federal law enacted in 1990 and reauthorized in 1997. The act is designed to protect the rights of students by ensuring that all children with disabilities are entitled to a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least-Restrictive Environment (LRE). IDEA strives not only to grant equal access to students with disabilities, but also to provide additional special education services and procedural safeguards. Special education services are individualized to meet the unique needs of students with disabilities. Special education may include individual or small group instruction, curriculum or teaching modifications, or specialized services such as physical, occupational, and speech therapy. Information regarding Special Education Program Services in the Riverside Unified School District, including types of available services, eligibility, identification, and monitoring, can be found at [http://www.riversideunified.org/departments/special\\_education](http://www.riversideunified.org/departments/special_education).

Our students that need an accommodation or intervention class to support an IEP and/or 504 plan or who have shown a need for intervention classes to maintain progress to graduate, such as support or credit recovery classes, will be placed in those classes on a case by case basis. For these students, accessibility to programs (IB DP, CA Partnership

Academies, AVID) will be carefully discussed with the student, parent, and counselor, in order to determine the optimal placement for the student in the least-restrictive environment. In the case of the IB DP, because the same standards of assessment are applied to all students, this discussion will seek to ensure that the student has the aptitude to meet all assessment requirements leading to the completion of the program.

**Inclusion and Counseling:** Our Special Education Advisor works closely with our counseling department and the John W. North High School faculty and staff to ensure that students with learning exceptionalities are provided support for their success. Each student receiving special education services under IDEA is assigned a special education teacher as a case manager. The case manager is responsible for annually notifying all classroom teachers about the students who are receiving services and providing a copy of the IEP. This ensures students receive the accommodations and/or modifications required. Students who are not eligible for services under IDEA may be eligible for services under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, which may provide accommodations in accordance with their needs.

Students in our Special Education program in grades eleven and twelve continue to be monitored by the counseling department. Students make decisions on course involvement in accordance with their interests, needs, and legal requirements outlined by IEP/504 plans. For students who participate in IB Diploma courses, the guidance counselor works with the IB Diploma Program coordinator and IB Diploma Program subject teachers to determine appropriate support strategies within the classroom and necessary modifications/differentiation strategies in accordance with the requirements set forth by the IBO and state and Federal governing bodies. When it is deemed necessary that an IB Diploma Program student may require arrangements during their preparatory work for assessment and/or during their written examinations, the guidance counselor works directly with the IB Diploma Program coordinator to determine individual needs based upon progress, documented learning exceptionalities, and IEP/504 plans and the IB Diploma Program coordinator completes any necessary formal requests for assessment access requirements with the IBO by the appropriate deadline.

Special arrangements, in accordance with requirements as outlined by the IBO in the *Access and inclusion policy*, published by the International Baccalaureate Organization in September 2022 and updated in November 2023 (<https://resources.ibo.org/ib/topic/Access-and-inclusion>), may include:

- Additional Time
- Rest Periods
- Special Seating Arrangements
- Word processor or computer
- Transcription
- Readers
- Communicators

- Prompters
- Vision aids/devices
- Hearing aids/devices
- Modifications to examination papers or assignments
- Extensions to deadlines
- Deferral
- Medical Aids/Equipment
- Exemption from one or more assessment components
- Other arrangements as requested by the school, documented in the student's ongoing file, and approved by the IBO

**Professional Development:** Guided by the pedagogical principle that teaching in the IB Diploma Program should be “differentiated to meet the needs of all learners” (*Approaches to teaching and learning in the Diploma Programme*, pg. 14), professional development on differentiating teaching practices is a priority for our general and special education teachers, including teachers whose schedules include IB DP courses. This training addresses “both students who display difficulties or live with conditions that are a barrier to learning, and students who display a higher than average aptitude in one or more subjects that require adaptations or extensions.” (*MYP Principles Into Practice* pg. 25) Differentiation should be thoughtfully planned and applied to all instruction, including within Diploma Program curriculum implementation, modification, revision, and assessment. Continued professional development opportunities and thoughtful implementation of differentiation will help enhance the attainment of growth for *all* students in the five categories defined by the Approaches to Learning:

- Thinking skills: getting *all* students to apply thinking critically and creatively; guiding them to make reasoned, ethical choices
- Communication skills: *all* students work to effectively communicate in written and oral forms in an appropriate manner for varying situations
- Social skills: *all* students work towards positive social relationships with both peers and adults
- Self-management skills: helping *all* students with organization, time-management, and affective skills like self-motivation and resilience
- Research skills: allowing *all* students to have experience with advanced informational literacy and an authentic understanding of academic honesty

Differentiation will give *all* of our diverse learners support in developing **cognitive** (information-processing and thinking skills), **affective** (behavioral and emotional management), and **metacognitive** (the ability to monitor the effectiveness of their learning processes) skills to be used within their current educational experiences and their future pathway as life-long learners in a global society.

**Challenges and Limitations of Inclusive Education in Diverse Classrooms:** In addition to proper training and professional development of teachers and related staff, it is acknowledged that inclusive education in diverse classrooms can face other challenges or limitations, including:

- limited resources in staffing, technology, or building spaces
- social or cultural barriers, including negative attitudes from parents, students, or peers
- cohesive collaboration between all stakeholders (parents, students, peers, teachers, administrators)
- time constraints
- personal biases

The staff at John W. North High School and the Riverside Unified School District commit to actively reducing challenges and barriers to inclusive education through continued education and a commitment to responsibly allocate resources to ensure all students at North become successful, responsible citizens and lifelong learners in a diverse and changing world.

**Inclusion/Special Education Policy Review and Revision:** This policy was developed with input from the district's secondary special education specialist and the gifted and talented education specialist. Site guidance included support from the guidance counseling staff, including the head counselor and special education advisor. The school-wide policies at John W. North, including the Husky Code of Conduct and policy governing Academic Integrity, Assessment Policy, Language Policy, IB Admissions Policy and this Inclusion Policy, are revisited annually through staff meetings, leadership team meetings, and subject matter team meetings. Policies set forth by these documents will be reviewed with the administrative and the site leadership teams. The IB DP Coordinator and head guidance counselor will be responsible for the process of reviewing this document with these groups and revising it during the WASC (Western Association of Schools and Colleges) cycle of review.

*Last review of Inclusion Policy August 2024, in preparation for WASC accreditation in 2025.*

## **References and Resources:**

*Access and inclusion policy, IBO, 2022*

*Approaches to teaching and learning in the Diploma Programme, IBO, 2015*

*Developing and aligning a school inclusion policy with the Programme standards and practices, IBO, 2023*

*Diploma Programme: Candidates with assessment access requirements, IBO, 2009*

*Equity and inclusive education in the IB, IBO, 2024*

<https://www.ibo.org/programmes/equity-and-inclusive-education-in-the-ib/>

*Handbook of Procedures for the Diploma Programme, IBO, 2014*

*Learning diversity in the International Baccalaureate programmes: Special educational needs within the International Baccalaureate programmes, IBO, 2010*

*MYP: From principles into practice, IBO, 2009*

*Primary Years Programme, Middle Years Programme, Diploma Programme and IB Career-related Certificate: Meeting student learning diversity in the classroom, IBO, 2013*

*Riverside Unified School District, Special Education Department,*

[http://www.riversideunified.org/departments/special\\_education](http://www.riversideunified.org/departments/special_education)

*Towards a continuum of international education, IBO, 2008*

*Special Educational Needs Policy, Vanguard High School, Marion County Public Schools, May 2014*

*Special Needs Policy, Washington-Lee High School, Arlington, Virginia, July 2013*

*Towards a continuum of international education, IBO, 2008*