



Kalkaska Middle School

Inclusion Practices for Special Educational Needs Students

*Creating and developing internationally-minded community leaders
for today and tomorrow.*

Purpose

Kalkaska Middle School, as an International Baccalaureate World School, has a responsibility to provide equal access to the curriculum for all students regardless of individual abilities and needs.

Definitions

Special Educational Needs (SEN) - refers to any student who shows a need for extra support or for challenge beyond the general curriculum including students with learning disabilities as well as the gifted and talented.

Inclusion - refers to providing access to all components of the MYP program for all students.

Differentiation - refers to an instructional design model that modifies the written, taught, and assessed curriculum in order to meet the needs of individual students.

Principles

- All students can learn and have a right to a holistic and inclusive education in a caring and stimulating environment.
- We place great emphasis on the responsibilities of all teachers to be aware of and provide for students with special educational needs.
- We believe all students should be responsible for their own learning by taking an active role in identifying, monitoring, and meeting their own learning needs and abilities.
- We view a student's education as a partnership between the student, the parent(s)/guardian(s), and the school.

Best Practices For

Affirming Identity and Building Self-Esteem

Affirming the identity of a learner encourages the qualities, attitudes and characteristics identified in the IB learner profile, promoting responsible citizenship and international-mindedness. Affirming identity is achieved at Kalkaska Middle School by:

- promoting a class and school environment that welcomes and embraces the diversity of the learner.
- valuing and using the diversity of cultural perspectives to enhance learning.
- working with parents and guardians to establish understanding of how best to collaborate to achieve shared goals.

Valuing Prior Knowledge

Previous learning experiences are taken into consideration at Kalkaska Middle School. It cannot be assumed that all learners share the same previous learning experiences so teachers may have to build up background knowledge for further learning. Therefore, teachers should:

- explicitly activate students' prior understanding,
- use their knowledge of students' prior understanding to differentiate tasks and activities that will build up the further background knowledge necessary for new learning to occur.

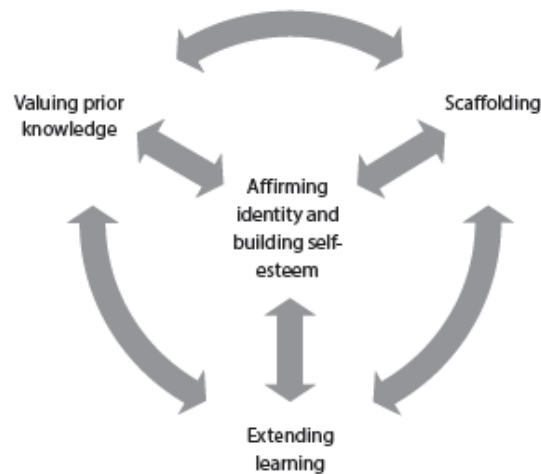
Scaffolding

Scaffolding is a strategy that enables learners to accomplish a task that would otherwise be impossible or much more difficult to accomplish. The use of graphic organizers to develop a piece of written research is an example of scaffolding. Examples of scaffolding at Kalkaska Middle School include:

- visual aids
- demonstrations
- dramatization
- small, structured collaborative groups
- lists of key terms and phrases
- graphic organizers
- chunking material
- identifying critical content

Extending Learning

Teachers at Kalkaska Middle School help students extend their learning by combining high expectations with opportunities for learner-centered practice and interaction with cognitively rich materials and experiences. Learners who read extensively have far greater opportunities to extend their academic language and concepts than those whose reading is limited. To that end, we at Kalkaska Middle School strive to provide opportunities to experience the enjoyment of reading and writing, and to be aware of a wide range of genres which are crucial to developing student learning. The use of assistive technology and software enables learners with language issues to access material they can engage with metacognitively.



Visual representation of the four principles of good practice in an IB SEN learning cycle.

Our Special Educational Needs (SEN) population includes students who need adjustments, adaptations, or modifications to the curriculum in order to meet their learning needs, access their classrooms and school and facilitate continued academic growth. These students may include, but are not limited to:

- special education students who have an active Individualized Education Plan in place
- English learners who have a barrier in the language of instruction
- students with medical or health issues which require a 504 plan
- high achieving or gifted students who are driven to pursue further inquiry

Inclusion:

At Kalkaska Middle School, every effort is made to provide the least restrictive learning environment (LRE) that appropriately matches the needs of each individual student. Therefore, inclusion can be implemented differently for each student, depending on many factors such as, but not limited to:

- the student's skill level
- the student's previous learning experiences
- the student's language skills
- the student's IEP or 504 plan

Inclusion may include:

- student present in the general education classroom
- support in the general education classroom
- specialized classrooms
- pull out support
- one-on-one learning with the support of paraprofessionals under the direction of the certified teacher

Common Practices of the IB Continuum

- **Program Components**
 - We promote the development of International Mindedness in all of our students through the IB Learner Profile.
 - We are committed to teaching through inquiry in all subject areas.
 - We provide pathways to second language acquisition for all students.
 - All Middle Years Programme (MYP) students participate in the culminating project for their program - the MYP Community Project.
 - Students are encouraged to take action to extend their learning and to help their community.
- **Assessment**
 - All teachers will utilize a variety of formative assessments to determine individual student needs and abilities and to tailor subsequent instruction.
 - Teachers will develop summative assessments that are differentiated to provide necessary modifications, challenges, and student choice.
 - Students who appear to have special educational needs and abilities will be given further internal and/or external assessments to identify appropriate modifications.
- **Support**
 - Classroom Support: Support for students with special educational needs and abilities may include curriculum modification, special education co-taught classrooms, enrichment activities, classroom accommodations, small group instruction, or one-on-one support.
 - Other Services: When it is determined that a student would benefit from additional support outside of the classroom, pull-out services are provided to meet academic, social, or behavioral needs. Additionally, paraprofessionals may provide further support to some students under the direction of a certified teacher.
- **Documentation**
 - Documentation of services received will be provided for students with SEN.
 - Progress will be reported twice a year, at the end of each semester.
 - Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) are written for students who are identified for special education services. These confidential plans will be revised annually and are shared with other school staff as needed.
 - When students change schools, all cumulative folders will be transferred. For students with IEPs, the special education staff from both schools will meet to ensure a smooth transition from one program to another.

- **Staff Development and Collaboration**

- All teachers receive IB training to promote an understanding of the components of their respective programs.
- Teachers receive staff development on co-teaching as a strategy to meet special educational needs.
- All teachers (including SEN teachers) regularly meet horizontally and vertically to collaborate on curriculum and assessment, to reflect on student learning, and to plan for differentiation.

Document Review

A committee will be formed annually to review the Inclusion Practices for SEN students. The committee will be made up of the building principal, IB Coordinator, parents, community members and representatives from each subject and grade level. The purpose of the committee will be to review the current document, revise as needed, and plan how to communicate current practices to staff.

Related Policies

We refer to and follow current legislation and school board policies to guide our decisions regarding appropriate levels of support for students with special educational needs.

- *Reviewed and Revised October 2016 by Collette Sabins, Heather Nowland, Daryl Dimon, Heather Reust, Bryan Karazia, Matt Price, Staci Short.*
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