

# Columbus Alternative High School

## International Baccalaureate

# **Inclusion Policy**

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# District Mission Statement and School Vision Statement

## Columbus City Schools Mission Statement:

"Each student is highly educated, prepared for leadership and service, and empowered for success as a citizen in a global community."

## Columbus Alternative High School Vision Statement:

"Each student who enters CAHS excels in college level coursework and graduates from CAHS with scholarships; passionate, open-minded and prepared to thrive as a global citizen in college and beyond."

## Rationale/Purpose

Columbus Alternative High School (CAHS), as part of the Columbus City Schools, strives to ensure all students are afforded the support necessary to be academically successful and reach their full potential. The International Baccalaureate Program (IB) at CAHS, in accordance with the Columbus City Schools anti-discrimination policy, will not discriminate based on sex, race, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, ancestry, familial status or military status.

This document serves to communicate to all stakeholders - parents/guardians, students, faculty and staff, and administration - the expectations and supports put in place to maintain an environment of academic excellence and opportunity to all IB students as mandated by the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) and Columbus City Schools. Further, this document provides key definitions and clear roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders to ensure the success of our students.

## Philosophy

Columbus Alternative High School firmly believes that all students deserve the opportunity to participate in the International Baccalaureate Program and does not discriminate based on sex, race, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, ancestry, familial status or military status. Students at CAHS are not denied access to the IB Diploma Coursework or Programme because of any special learning designations. Further, we recognize that a diverse group of learners enhances the experiences and education of all participants.

The Inclusion Policy exists to ensure that supports and policies are in place to support those students who fall under Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (henceforth referred to as IDEA), the Americans with Disabilities Act (henceforth referred to as ADA) and English Language Learners (henceforth referred to as ELL). Further, all students should have the same opportunities to succeed in International Baccalaureate courses, including the full IB Diploma Programme.

All stakeholders are responsible for the success of the student learner, and it is important that the student learner understands and experiences support from all stakeholders. The International Baccalaureate offers students the opportunity to push their thinking by asking students to consider varying perspectives. Columbus Alternative High School stands by this philosophy and will work with all student learners, including those with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), 504 Plans (504s), and students who are English Language Learners and/or come from a home where English is not the primary and/or native language to provide access to these opportunities.

## Inclusion Policy Goals

The goals of this Inclusion Policy are:

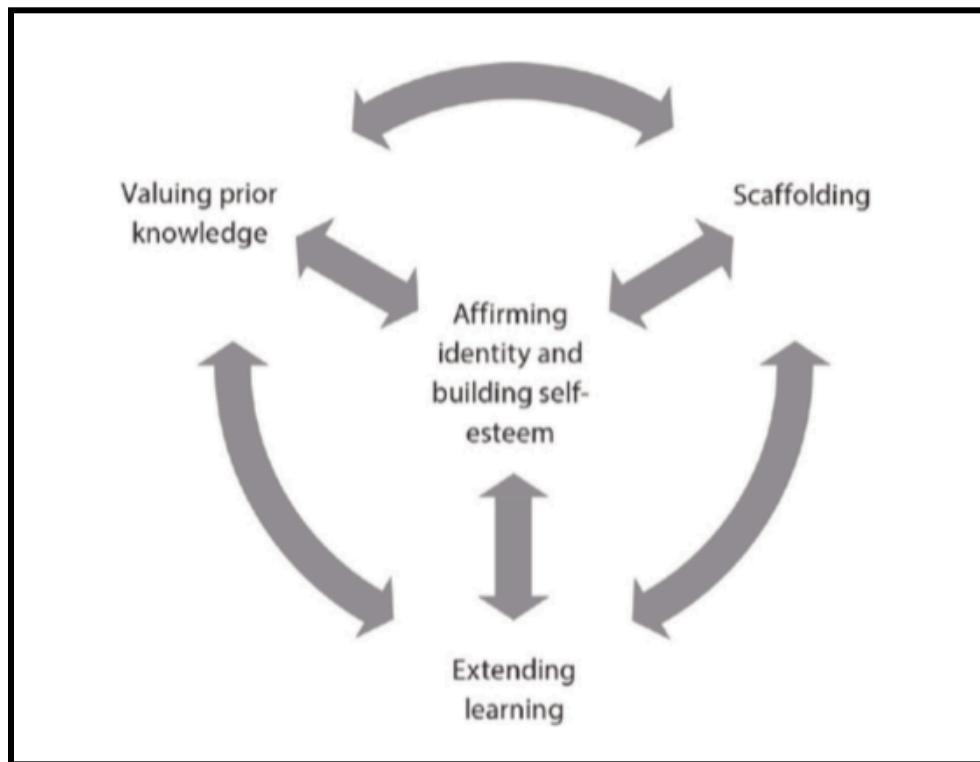
- Comply with federal, state, and local/district laws regarding students with disabilities, including, but not limited to, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (1973). ([See Resources](#))
- Provide clarification of the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders, including the school, IB Coordinator, faculty and staff, parents and students, to ensure the academic success of all students, regardless of disability.
- Assist students in accessing the [IB Academic Curriculum](#) and [CAHS IB Assessment Policy](#).
- Remove and/or mitigate barriers to learning so that all students - regardless of sex, race, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, ancestry, familial status or military status - have the opportunity to flourish and come into their own as independent and empowered learners.
- Commit to the implementation of culturally responsive teaching and learning practices that align with the values of the International Baccalaureate Organization, the Ohio Department of Education, and Columbus City Schools.

## [The IB's principles of teaching for learning diversity<sup>1</sup>](#)

The IB has identified four principles of teaching that promote equal access to the curriculum for all learners across the continuum of IB learning.

The four principles of good practice in the IB learning cycle:

Figure 1.1



### **How can we affirm identity to build self-esteem?**

At the core of all learning is the affirmation of student identity to promote self-esteem. Students with a positive identity are more able to take the risks necessary for successful learning to help promote self-efficacy. This can also be defined as a student's sense of belonging. We historically have administered a fall and a spring survey that assesses these attributes and provides a playbook to address identified gaps and barriers.

An affirmative model of identity ensures that all students are visible and valued. It is a model where all learners recognize that it is possible to make a difference in their own lives and society.

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<sup>1</sup> IB Learning Diversity and Inclusion (2018) p. 11

Affirming learner identity encourages the qualities, attitudes and characteristics identified in the IB learner profile to promote international-mindedness, effective learners and responsible citizenship.

### **In what ways can we value prior knowledge?**

Prior knowledge is the foundation on which to develop new learning. It cannot be assumed that students will necessarily share the same previous learning or will be able to demonstrate learning in the same way.

Therefore, teachers should:

- meaningfully assess existing knowledge, strengths and interests
- recognize that there may be gaps or overlaps in learning

### **How do we scaffold learning to support independence?**

Scaffolding involves developing student independence and provides access to the curriculum for all students. Assessing prior learning is crucial so that smaller steps can be incorporated into the learning process and students are scaffolded in working towards mastery while receiving constructive learning feedback at all stages. Scaffolds such as pre-teaching, demonstrations, experiential learning, chunking information, visual aids, templates and graphic organizers can be designed so that prompting can be diminished over time and independence is fostered.

How do we extend learning for all?

| Extending learning for all                    |                                        |                                               |                   |                      |                   |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| <b>IB approaches to teaching and learning</b> | <b>Teaching to learner variability</b> | <b>Creating optimal learning environments</b> | <b>Assessment</b> | <b>Collaboration</b> | <b>Technology</b> |
|                                               |                                        |                                               |                   |                      |                   |

More information about extending learning for all can be found in the [IB Learning Diversity and Inclusion document](#).

# Key Terms for Inclusion Policy

## "Free Appropriate Public Education" ("FAPE")

The provision of regular or special education and related aids and services that are designed to meet the individual educational needs of students with a disability as adequately as the needs of non-disabled students. These services must meet the standards of the [Ohio Department of Education](#); must include an appropriate preschool, elementary school, or secondary school education in the state.

## Section 504

A federal law which prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities. The law provides: No otherwise qualified individual with a disability... shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance... 29 USC § 794. One of the principal purposes of Section 504 is to ensure that students with disabilities are not denied access to educational facilities, programs, and opportunities on the basis of their disability. For a student to have a disability which may be protected under this law, he or she must: (1) have a mental or physical impairment, (2) which substantially limits, (3) one or more major life activities. For a student to be considered an "eligible student" under Section 504, all three criteria must be fulfilled.

## Section 504 Plan

Where a student is found to be eligible under Section 504, the need for a Section 504 Plan must be determined. The Section 504 Team, which should include the parent/guardian, will be responsible for determining the services that are needed to provide the students a FAPE. The Plan should specify how services will be provided and by whom. If a Section 504 Plan is developed for a student, all school personnel with implementation responsibilities should be informed of the existence and particulars of the Plan.

## Child with a Disability

Either: a child who has a disability which meets the definition of a disability term included in the section "Definitions of Disability Terms;" or at the school district's choice, a child with a developmental delay (see definition later in this section) who needs special education and related services. A child with a disability is identified through processes established by Columbus City Schools, the Ohio Department of Education,

and the United States Department of Education to be in compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

### Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a law that makes available a free appropriate public education to eligible children with disabilities throughout the nation and ensures special education and related services to those children.

### Intervention Assistance Team (IAT)

A team of educators from your child's school that meet to design various forms of assistance for children who are experiencing difficulty. You may be invited to participate in an IAT meeting about your child. IAT meetings occur as a part of the MTSS process. IAT meetings typically include a Grade Level Administrator, School Counselor, Special Education Coordinator, and Regular Education Teacher.

### Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

As much as possible, children with disabilities (including children in public or nonpublic schools or other care facilities) are educated with children who do not have disabilities. A child with a disability is removed from the regular educational environment only when the child's disability is severe enough that the child cannot be educated in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services.

### Modification

Any change that is made in your child's school, work or environment to meet his or her individual educational needs.

### Special Education

Specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parents, to meet the unique needs of a 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, and includes the terms specified in the federal regulation at 34 C.F.R. 300.39

### English Language Learners (ELL)

English language learner. A national-origin-minority student who is limited-English-proficient. This term is often preferred over limited-English-proficient (LEP) as it highlights accomplishments rather than deficits.

## English as a Second Language (ESL)

A program of techniques, methodology and special curriculum designed to teach ELL students English language skills, which may include listening, speaking, reading, writing, study skills, content vocabulary, and cultural orientation. ESL instruction is usually in English with little use of native language.

## Informed Parental Consent

The permission of a parent to enroll their child in an ELL program, or the refusal to allow their child to enroll in such a program, after the parent is provided effective notice of the educational options and the district's educational recommendation.

## Inclusive Access Arrangements

Inclusive access arrangements are pre-examination measures or accommodations to allow a candidate to access the assessment that reflects their experience during learning. As such they cannot be requested retroactively. The IB Coordinator submits requests for inclusive access arrangements through the IB based on psychological and medical documentation provided by families.

# Special Education Disability Categories

## Autism

A developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age 3 that adversely affects a child's educational performance. Other characteristics often associated with autism are engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines and unusual responses to sensory experiences. The term does not apply if a child's educational performance is adversely affected primarily because the child has a serious emotional disturbance. A child who manifests the characteristics of autism after age three could be identified as having autism if the requirements of the first two sentences of this definition are satisfied.

## Cognitive Disability

Significantly below-average general intellectual capability that exists along with deficits in adaptive behavior It is demonstrated during the child's developmental period and negatively affects a child's educational performance.

### Deaf-blindness

Hearing and visual impairments occurring together. The combination causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational problems that the child with deaf-blindness cannot be accommodated in special education programs designed only for children with deafness or only for children with blindness.

### Deafness

A hearing impairment that is so severe that the child is unable to process language through hearing, with or without amplification, and the child's educational performance is affected.

### Emotional Disturbance

A condition showing one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a degree that it affects a child's educational performance, resulting in: An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory or health factors; An inability to build or maintain satisfactory relationships with peers and teachers; Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances; A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression; or A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems. The term includes schizophrenia. The term does not apply to children who are socially maladjusted, unless it is determined that they have a serious emotional disturbance.

### Hearing Impairment

Impairment in hearing, whether permanent or fluctuating, that adversely affects a child's educational performance, but that is not included under the definition of deafness.

### Multiple Disabilities

Impairments that occur simultaneously (such as cognitive disability-blindness and cognitive disability-orthopedic impairment), the combination of which causes such severe educational problems that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for one of the impairments. The term does not include deaf-blindness.

### Orthopedic Impairment

A severe orthopedic impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes impairments caused by congenital anomaly (e.g., clubfoot, absence of some member), impairments caused by disease (e.g.,

poliomyelitis, bone tuberculosis) and impairments from other causes (e.g., cerebral palsy, amputation and fractures or burns that cause contractures).

### Other Health Impairment

Having limited strength, vitality, or alertness, including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli, that results in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment, that is due to chronic or acute health problems such as asthma, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, diabetes, epilepsy, a heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever or sickle cell anemia and Tourette syndrome; and adversely affects a child's educational performance.

### Specific Learning Disability

A disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, write, spell or to do mathematical calculations. The term includes such conditions as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia and developmental aphasia. The term does not include children who have learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing or motor abilities, of cognitive disability, of emotional disturbance or of environmental, cultural or economic disadvantage. Speech or Language Impairment A communication disorder, such as stuttering, impaired articulation, language impairment or a voice impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

### Traumatic Brain Injury

An injury to the brain caused by external physical force or by other medical conditions, including but not limited to stroke, anoxia, infectious disease, aneurysm, brain tumors and neurological insults resulting from medical or surgical treatments. The injury results in total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment, or both, that adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term applies to open or closed head injuries, as well as to other medical conditions that result in acquired brain injuries. The injuries result in impairments in one or more areas, such as cognition; language; memory; attention; reasoning; abstract thinking; judgment; problem solving; sensory, perceptual, and motor abilities; psychosocial behavior; physical functions; information processing; and speech. The term does not apply to brain injuries that are congenital or degenerative, or brain injuries induced by birth trauma.

### Visual Impairment

Including Blindness Impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes both partial sight and blindness. Visual impairment for any child means: A visual impairment, not primarily perceptual in nature, resulting in a measured visual acuity of 20/70 or poorer in the better eye with correction; or o A physical eye condition that affects visual functioning to the extent that special education placement, materials and/or services are required in an educational setting.

### Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

Evidence based model of schooling that uses data-based problem-solving to integrate academic and behavioral instruction and intervention. The integrated instruction and intervention is delivered to students in varying intensities (multiple tiers) based on student need. Decision-making seeks to ensure that district resources reach the appropriate students at the appropriate levels to accelerate the performance of all students to achieve and/or exceed proficiency.

# International Baccalaureate Organization Principles

These principles were taken directly from the IBO's Access and Inclusion Policy (2021).

All inclusive access arrangements authorized by the IB are based on the following principles.

## **Maintaining standards**

1.1 - 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, so the same standards of assessment are applied to all candidates.

1.2 - The arrangements requested for a candidate must not give that candidate an advantage in any assessment.

1.3 - The inclusive access arrangements described in this document are intended for candidates with the aptitude to meet all assessment requirements leading to the completion of the programme.

1.4 - In the case of internal assessments, marks must always be awarded based on the candidate's work in accordance with the assessment criteria. Under no circumstances must teachers consider other factors such as the candidate's challenges or difficulties.

1.5 - A subject result means the candidate has met the objectives of that subject, i.e. they have been able to demonstrate what was being assessed. This means there is no need to grant an exception for the assessment because the student was capable of completing it.

Therefore, a request for exemption, which would still yield a subject result, must only be submitted after careful consideration and only where inclusive access arrangements and reasonable adjustments cannot be applied. The IB will use its discretion and only grant exemptions as a very last resort and in exceptional cases.

All students, including those with specific learning challenges have access to study two languages (English and another World Language). All students pursuing the IB Diploma are required to study a language within the Language Acquisition group.

## **Reflecting usual ways of working**

1.6 - Inclusive access arrangements are pre-examination measures to allow a candidate to access the assessment that reflects their experience during learning. As such they cannot be requested retroactively.

1.7 - Inclusive access arrangements for a candidate must be well planned and put in place throughout the course of learning and teaching including classroom work and formative assessments.

1.8 - Schools must plan inclusive access arrangements for their candidates based on the IB criteria as stated in this policy and teachers' observations of the candidate in the classroom during classwork and tests. If the school intends to plan inclusive access arrangements for a candidate that are not in line with the eligibility criteria stated in this policy, they must first consult the IB.

1.9 - The inclusive access arrangements requested for a candidate must be their usual way of working during their course of study. In almost all instances, if the inclusive access arrangements planned by the school do not follow the eligibility criteria stated in this policy, and have not been previously discussed with the IB (see Section 1.8), they cannot be authorized by the IB even if they have been the candidate's usual way of working. Only in very exceptional and unusual cases will the IB authorize a request for inclusive access arrangements that are not the usual way of working and that have been put in place to support the candidate only in the last six months of study or thereafter, just prior to the examinations.

1.10 - The IB aims to authorize inclusive access arrangements that are compatible with those normally available to the candidate concerned. However, authorization will only be given for arrangements that are consistent with the policy and practice of the IB. It should not be assumed that the IB will necessarily agree to the arrangements requested by a school.

## **Consistency for all candidates**

1.11 - The IB is committed to an educational philosophy based on international-mindedness. Therefore, the inclusive access arrangements policy of the IB may not reflect the standard practice of any one country. To achieve equity among candidates with access requirements, the policy represents the result of a consideration of accepted practices in different countries.

1.12 - The IB will ensure that, wherever possible, arrangements for candidates with a similar type of access requirement are the same. Due to the cultural differences that

occur in the recognition of learning support requirements and the nature of access arrangements granted in schools, there may be some compromise that may be necessary to help ensure comparability between candidates in different countries.

1.13 - Each request for inclusive access arrangements will be judged on its own merit. Previous authorization of arrangements, either by the IB or another awarding body, will not influence the decision on whether to authorize the arrangements that have been requested by the coordinator.

### **Confidentiality**

1.14 - The IB treats all information about a candidate as confidential. If required, information will only be shared with appropriate IB personnel and members of the final award committee (who will be instructed to treat such information as confidential).

### **Maintaining integrity of the assessment**

1.15 - If a school does not meet the conditions specified by the IB when administering inclusive access arrangements, the candidate will not be awarded a grade in the subject and level concerned.

1.16 - A school must not communicate with an examiner (IB exam grader) about a candidate's learning support requirements.

1.17 - All examinations must be invigilated (proctored) according to the regulations governing the conduct of examinations for the relevant programme.

1.18 - The person invigilating (proctoring) the candidate's examination must not be a relative of the candidate, or any other person with whom there may be an apparent or perceived conflict of interest.

### **Exceptional issues**

1.19 - Any issues that arise from the nature of the inclusive access arrangements, or any unforeseen difficulties encountered by the candidate during the examinations, should be reported to IB Answers as soon as possible. Contact the IB Coordinator to initiate this report.

# Roles and Responsibilities of Stakeholders

## Responsibilities of the School

**The school will work with Columbus City Schools to ensure we are in compliance with all district, local, state, and federal mandates for students with special education needs.**

- The school will build the capacity of its faculty and staff in working with students with special education needs.
- The school will work with students with special education needs to ensure their needs are being met and they are being treated fairly and appropriately.
- School counselors, the school psychologist, school nurse, and other appropriate staff will host meetings for IEP and 504 reviews and initiations and provide updates to staff when needed.
- The school will continually monitor successful implementation of this Special Education Needs Policy.

## Responsibilities of the IB Coordinator

- The IB Coordinator will gather necessary documentation and approval from students and their families in order to submit requests for inclusive access services (testing accommodations).
- The IB Coordinator will apply to the IB for students' accommodations for assessments and other circumstances.
- The IB Coordinator will communicate accommodations approved by the IB to students and their families prior to testing.
- The IB Coordinator will communicate expectations with faculty and provide appropriate support when working with students with special education needs.
- The IB Coordinator will maintain confidential information provided regarding students with special education needs.

## Responsibilities of the Faculty and Staff

- The faculty and staff will provide appropriate accommodations, modifications, and interventions for students with special education needs as outlined in the IEP or 504 as well as ELL students.
  - See the [CAHS IB Language Policy](#) for additional information on ELL support.

- The appropriate faculty (counselor, psychologist, nurse) will maintain communication with the IB Coordinator regarding new or updated IEP or 504 Plans.
- The faculty and staff will maintain confidentiality of information provided regarding students with special education needs and/or English Language Learner needs.
- The faculty and staff will participate in training on working with students with special education needs and/or English Language Learners.
- The faculty and staff will comply with all district, local, state and federal laws and policies.

### Responsibilities of the Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

- The parent(s)/guardian(s) will maintain communication with the school, IB Coordinator and/or faculty and staff and provide updates that may impact the student's IEP or 504 (including medical documentation) and/or English Language Learner needs.
- The parent(s)/guardian(s) will play an active role in their child's academic education and social emotional well-being, including, but not limited to, parent-teacher conferences, participating in the decision-making process, completing frequent monitoring of student progress and potential barriers to education.
- The parent(s)/guardian(s) will make a request for a change in services if he/she/they feel it is necessary.
- The parent(s)/guardian(s)/school staff will provide any documentation needed for IBO assessment accommodations. The parent(s)/guardian(s) will also provide approval for the IB Coordinator to submit these documents to the IB on the students behalf if they choose to use the accommodations available to them. IBO typically requires two pieces of documentation to verify eligibility. These are identified as Medical, Psychological, or Educational evidence.

### Responsibilities of the Student

- The student will be proactive in their education by asking for help or additional time before the due date of an assignment or assessment.
- The student will be an active participant in their classes and progress meetings.
- The student will self-advocate. Potential avenues of self-advocacy include:
  - Maintaining open communication with teachers regarding progress and needs on assignments and assessments.
  - Reaching out to teachers to ask for additional explanation or support when needed.

- Maintaining open communication with school counselors regarding social and emotional well-being.
- Reaching out to school counselors with questions or concerns about self-advocacy and self-care.
- Establish peer relationships to help with collaborative study, accountability, and academic support.
- Share and celebrate academic and non-academic successes with family, friends, and school staff.
- Find ways to maintain balance in your life to benefit social-emotional health and well-being.

## Resources

- [CCS Office of Compliance](#)
- [International Baccalaureate Organization](#)
- [International Baccalaureate Organization Inclusion Learning and Diversity Policy](#)
- [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act \(IDEA\)](#)
- Whose IDEA Is This? A Parent's Guide to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (No longer accessible on US Dept of Ed)
- Developing Programs for English Language Learners: Glossary (No longer accessible US Dept of Ed)
- [CAHS IB Assessment Policy](#)
- [CAHS IB Access and/or Admission Policy](#)
- [CAHS IB Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [CAHS IB Language Policy](#)

## Inclusion Policy Review

It is expected that this document will be used as an inclusion “roadmap” for CAHS teachers and staff, and that it will be particularly useful to students and families seeking to find clarity in the language and practices of inclusion at CAHS. It will be available to CAHS students and parents through posting on the school website ([www.ccssoh.us/cahs](http://www.ccssoh.us/cahs)) and in hard copy by request. Additionally, all IB DP course syllabi will utilize this document to derive course inclusion practices and policies within each IB course that CAHS offers.

The policy will be re-visited and examined annually by the IB Teacher Based Team (TBT), the IB Coordinator, and the MTSS Committee through collaborative discussions and meetings that will be held and will include those faculty members, specialists, counselors and administrators who are involved in the procedures.

Policy Revision Dates: August 2026

Policy Revision Committee:

This document was created in collaboration with the IB Diploma Coordinator, IB Teachers, Staff, and Administrators.