

## **Hawthorne IB World School's Special Education Needs (SEN) Policy**

### **Philosophy**

We believe in a child-centered school with the focus that all of our students have the opportunity to experience success in all aspects of their learning. We emphasize inquiry and take a constructivist approach throughout the day. We work collaboratively to help all students meet and/or exceed their academic and non-academic potential by providing them with a meaningful, relevant and engaging Primary Years Programme. Our goal is to provide equitable access to the IB Primary Years Program; we strive to provide all learners both inclusive and supportive programs that address the individual needs and varied learning styles of learners, including those identified with special needs. By recognizing the diverse needs of our learners, we will be able to develop and empower globally-minded citizens who are confident, open-minded, risk takers who will take action in their world.

### **Objectives**

The objectives of this policy are:

- To provide a well-balanced environment that allows access to the Primary Years Program for all learners while recognizing and capitalizing on differences and diversity.
- To ensure that all learners have full access to the curriculum through inclusive and/or supportive programs.
- To present roles and responsibilities for all stakeholders (staff, students, and parents).
- To provide structures and systems needed to help support the diversity of all learners.
- To advocate that educational needs of all learners are met.
- To have a reflective process in which we can determine next steps for all learners.

### **Scope and Sequence:**

The scope and sequence of the program for Special Education is determined by Federal and State regulations in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, IDEA -2004. PYP Grade Level Scope and Sequence.

### **Inclusion:**

All students at Hawthorne IB World School are included in the Primary Years Programme. Each child from transitional kindergarten to sixth grade, including our special education students, benefit from all aspects of the IB instructional programme. Special education students learn the vocabulary and philosophy of becoming a global student. The students develop the attributes of the learner profile throughout their day, both in the general education classroom and when they are in specialized educational settings.

**Using Prior Knowledge and Understanding:**

Teachers of special education students are mandated to carefully consider the student's individualized program and specific needs as an important aspect of learning when they instruct and build curriculum for their students.

**Instructional Practices:**

Our staff utilizes evidence-based teaching practices that include the following: activating prior learning, scaffolding, inquiry-based discussions, differentiated instruction, direct and indirect instruction, multiple intelligences and flexible groupings.

**Differentiation:**

Differentiated instruction is the practice of providing the diverse needs of a classroom by modifying and adapting instruction, inquiry, materials, student projects, and assessments to meet the learning needs of all learners. This can be achieved by looking at classroom assessments to determine the strengths and weaknesses of all learners. Students are then placed into groups within their class to provide differentiated instruction using, but not limited to, tiered lessons, leveled readers, enrichment packets, etc., for a designated amount of time. We worked collaboratively to provide materials, resources and support for each student's unit of inquiry as much as possible.

**Affirming Identity and Building Self Esteem:**

- Hawthorne provides opportunities to affirm and support the diverse needs of our students:
- Monthly assemblies that recognize IB attitudes and IB learner profile.
- Positive reinforcement cards are given out to individuals who demonstrate IB attitudes and learner profiles.
- "Bear Cub Reader" time for kindergarten children who are knowledgeable thinkers and show responsibility and commitment to becoming life-long learners.
- Balance Keepers
- "Positive Sprinkles" signs out front every morning

**Students with Learning Needs Identification Procedures**

Identification of a student with a learning need can occur at any age or stage of development. When a classroom teacher suspects that a student may need additional support, the procedure for referral is as follows:

- Once a teacher suspects that a student may need additional support the teacher needs to fill out the Partnering for Student Success (P4SS) online student pre-referral. The referrer/person logging the initial concern could be a teacher, counselor, principal, etc.
- Teachers are to document the initial concern, interventions (4 - 6 weeks of specific, targeted, attainable and measurable interventions done in the class) and outcomes. The

goal is to successfully address and resolve the concern and NOT have to advance the student referral to the Student Assessment Team.

- Those students who have not shown adequate progress will then move to the next step, more formalized, of the COST (Coordination of Services Team)/SST (Student Study Team) process. This process includes team member assignments that may include the classroom teacher, principal, resource specialist, speech and language pathologist, school psychologist parents/guardians and sometimes may include the student. The COST team gathers and comes up with additional intervention strategies and documents outcomes. Measurable, attainable goals are set. The goal is to successfully address and resolve the concern and not have to advance the student referral to the final review stage.
- In the event the student referral reaches the final review stage, the special education case carrier takes over the student referral. Once parental consent has been obtained, a formal assessment for special education begins. The referral and team continue to monitor the student during the evaluation process.
- Advantages of P4SS include: all documents are kept electronically so schools are never chasing the file. File moves with the child as soon as they are registered in another school in our district. It also allows for oversight at the school site administrator and district administrator level. The process is consistent across all schools. Email notifications keep the referrer and team on track. Printable reports for parents at the SST meeting are available.

### **Supports for Special Education Services (SPED):**

If the IEP (Individualized Education Program) Team determines that a student meets the eligibility criteria for special education services, then an IEP will be put into place for a student. The IEP team, made up parent, teacher, special education teacher, school psychologist, and principal discuss what additional supports the student needs to best address their individual needs. Based on individual needs students can receive daily or weekly support from the school special education resource staff (IB Trained). Students' academic deficits are addressed in the areas of Language Arts, Writing, and/or Mathematics using both push-in and pull-out models. The special education staff collaborates with classroom teachers to help provide accommodations and/or modifications in the classroom so the student can participate in the general PYP curriculum. The special education staff has access to all IB unit planners and rotates planning time with different grade levels so that she can support units of inquiry.

### **Site based meetings**

- Minimum 3 per year
- All SPED parents at the site are invited

## **Supports for Students Identified as Gifted and Talented (GATE)**

OMSD is committed to the intellectual and emotional development of our Gifted and Talented Students.

### **Identification:**

OMSD GATE students are identified as High Achieving Gifted Learners or Intellectual Gifted Students. In order to be identified as High Achieving Gifted Learner, a variety of assessment data is reviewed including SBAC, district and classroom assessments and teacher referral.

Students in grades 2-6 are identified as intellectually gifted when they meet the criteria on the CogAT (Cognitive Abilities Test), a non-verbal reasoning exam. The NNAT (Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test) assessment is administered to every second grader in our district. Students at any grade level can be referred by their teacher or parent for intellectual testing.

We also encourage students with specialized talents to be identified into the program. Talented students are identified in the areas of visual and/or performing arts by portfolio presentations that are reviewed by a district committee.

### **Program and Instruction:**

OMSD ensures that our GATE program adheres to California Ed Code and State Board of Education GATE Plan GATE ED 52206: (a) The governing boards of school districts that elect to provide programs pursuant to this chapter may establish programs for gifted and talented pupils consisting of special day classes, part-time groupings, and cluster groupings, consistent with the regulations of the State Board of Education. These programs shall be planned and organized as an integrated, differentiated learning experience within the regular school day. All OMSD GATE students are in GATE cluster full day classes or GATE cluster core content classes.

GATE students in OMSD receive specialized instruction from bell to bell. The instructional program includes:

- Differentiated activities related to the core curriculum; not more or extra work, rather more rigorous work which include conceptualized teaching and learning.

- Independent study, acceleration, flexible grouping, learning centers and enrichment
- Depth and Complexity

**Professional Development:** All teachers of GATE students have received professional development in addressing the needs of these learners through differentiated instruction. This instruction includes the use of Depth and Complexity, independent study, compacting, acceleration and learning centers.

#### **Site based meetings**

- Minimum 3 per year
- All GATE parents at the site are invited
- Parent representative from PAC should present information from PAC meetings

#### **Communication and Evaluation of Policy**

Our SEN policy is posted on the school website. It will be reviewed annually by the entire staff.

When formal revisions to the policy are being considered, feedback will be obtained from all stakeholders.