



Fort Myers High School Learning Support Policy (Special Needs Policy)



Exceptional Student Education (ESE)

Students with disabilities and exceptional abilities are serviced by the Exceptional Student Education Program. Service Delivery Models are varied to the specific needs of the student and are identified and outlined in the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Educational Plan (EP). IEP's/EP's spell out the type, duration, and methods used to meet each student's goal(s), including students not able to achieve a standard high school diploma, some of whom will work on a special certificate or diploma; this, again, is driven by a student's IEP. Faculty and staff directly working with students in ESE are trained and certified in the areas of expertise that aligns with the needs of the student. Special educational needs within the International Baccalaureate Programmes, 2010:5, are provided and detailed within the IEP/EP and support the goals of the IB Programmes.

The FMHS Learning Support Policy is aligned with the policy of the International Baccalaureate (IB) for diploma candidates with learning support requirements. "The IB believes that all candidates must be allowed to take their examinations under fair and equitable conditions. Where standard 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 access arrangements may be authorized." It is expected that all students will experience positive learning environments based upon the IB's principles of good practice: affirming identity and building self-esteem; valuing prior knowledge; scaffolding and extending learning strengths are celebrated, challenges circumvented.

In order to reflect IB's inclusive approach to education, changes have been made to the terminology. The staff includes the A9.1.1 Terminology

- 'special assessment arrangements' will now be termed as 'inclusive assessment arrangements'.
- 'special educational needs' will now be referred to as 'learning support requirements'
- 'candidates with special assessment needs' will be referred to as 'candidates with assessment access requirements'.

Services available:

GF: Gifted Services

The State of Florida mandates that gifted services be provided for qualifying students. In order to qualify a student must; have an IQ (Intelligence Quotient) two standard deviations above the mean (130), exhibit a majority of gifted traits as measured by Gifted Characteristics Checklist, and demonstrate the need for a special program. Each gifted student has an EP (Educational Plan) and the school receives extra funding to meet their unique needs through ESE (Exceptional Student Education). Gifted students are serviced by a teacher with special endorsement in gifted education, using both the *consultative* and

support facilitation models. The gifted endorsed teacher works with a staff, students and parents to assure that the special needs of these bright students are being met.

Candidates with assessment access requirements (2009) identified as gifted and talented, or exceptionally able, may be globally gifted, in specific areas, or indeed be gifted in some areas but experience learning challenges in other areas. Special talents need to be encouraged, nurtured, and extended, and students need to be challenged to think laterally about complex ideas, issues, and situations, even if a student is receiving learning support in other areas. Creating opportunities for extension may well involve seeking out and working with local universities, local organizations or online providers. Curriculum and learning choices should be made in collaboration with the students and their parents.

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

With the expansion of our global society we often find students entering school who do not use English as their primary language. Teachers and administrators who interact with these students must have a special certification or endorsement in ESOL. A variety of special accommodations are available for these students to promote their overall academic success.

504 Students

The American with Disabilities Act (504) mandates that no person can be discriminated against due to an impairment or disability. Many students have health issues or impairments that do not meet the strict Exceptional Student Education (ESE) guidelines. We are required by law to provide classroom and testing accommodations to these students. Each 504 student has an individualized plan that the school and classroom teacher must follow.

Guidance and Counseling Services

There are two full time guidance counselors for traditional students (non-IB students). Ongoing responsibilities include: coordinate parent-teacher conferences; scheduling; credits; grades; individual counseling for personal/academic concerns; proctoring AP, PSAT, and FCAT Testing, visiting classrooms to discuss all academic needs including academic histories; graduation; dual enrollment; scholarships; and other related areas. Additionally, they attend all IEP meetings, write and update 504 plans, initiate paperwork for Child Study when needed, complete and assist students with Dual Enrollment, SAT/ACT, and Waiver paper work.

- **Consultative Services for Learning and Emotional Disabilities**
- **Intensive Language and Academics**
- **Hearing / Visually Impaired**
- **Social Communications:**
- **Speech and Language:**

- **Occupational and Physical Therapy/Adaptive Physical Education:**

With the wide variety of disabilities comes a wide variety of services offered at Fort Myers High to meet each student's special needs. All services are driven by an IEP (Individual Educational Plan) which identifies the type, duration, and method used to meet each individual's goals. All teachers are trained and certified in their area of expertise. Some students spend one or two periods in these specialized classes, while others are there for the entire day. While all disabled students are not able to achieve a standard high school diploma, some are working on a special certificate or diploma. This, again, is driven by a student's IEP.

Principles

All inclusive assessment arrangements that may be authorized by the IB are based on the following principles:

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, regardless of whether or not they have learning support requirements.

1.2 Inclusive assessment arrangements are intended to reduce the adverse effects of a candidate's longterm challenge(s) when demonstrating his or her level of attainment. The arrangements requested for a candidate must not give that candidate an advantage in any assessment component.

1.3 The inclusive assessment arrangements described in this document are intended for candidates with the aptitude to meet all assessment requirements leading to the award of the diploma or course results.

1.4 If inclusive assessment arrangements are necessary for a candidate during the course of their study of the Diploma Programme or practice examinations, the school may provide the arrangements. If the arrangements are required for assessment, this document lists the arrangements that do not require prior authorization from the IB. For all other arrangements, prior authorization from the IB Assessment centre is mandatory. Similarly, if a Diploma Programme candidate has difficulties meeting the requirements for creativity, action, and or service (CAS), IB Answers must be consulted.

1.5 The IB aims to authorize inclusive assessment 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. Coordinators are required to provide information on the candidate's usual method of working in the classroom.

1.6 The IB is committed to an educational philosophy based on international-mindedness.

Therefore, the inclusive assessment arrangements policy of the IB may not reflect the standard practice of any one country. To achieve equity among candidates with assessment access requirements, the policy represents the result of a consideration of accepted practices in different countries.

1.7 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 which may be necessary to help ensure comparability between candidates in different countries.

1.8 Each request for inclusive assessment 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 to authorize the arrangements that have been requested by the coordinator.

1.9 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.

1.10 The IB does not flag or annotate in any way the results of a candidate for whom inclusive assessment arrangements have been authorized.

1.11 If a school does not meet the conditions specified by the IB when administering inclusive assessment arrangements, or makes arrangements without authorization, the candidate may not be awarded a grade in the subject and level concerned. Candidates with assessment 4 access requirements

1.12 If it can be demonstrated that a candidate's lack of proficiency in his or her response language(s) arises from an identified learning support requirement, inclusive assessment arrangements may be authorized. (For subjects in groups 3 to 6, all candidates are allowed to use a translating dictionary in the written examinations.)

1.13 If inclusive assessment arrangements are authorized for internal assessment, the IB may require the candidate's work to be submitted to the IB Assessment Centre for review.

1.14 A school must not inform an examiner of a candidate's condition or adverse circumstance. Similarly, in the case of internally assessed work, teachers must not make any adjustments when marking a candidate's work. If appropriate, the IB will ensure that reasonable adjustments are applied.

1.15 The list of inclusive assessment arrangements available is revised regularly. The IB will consider alternative arrangements proposed by a coordinator, provided those arrangements could be made available to all candidates with similar requirements.

1.16 According to the document *General regulations: Diploma Programme*, a Diploma Programme candidate may participate in three examination sessions to be awarded the diploma.

At the discretion of the IB, a candidate with learning support requirements may be allowed additional sessions.

1.17 If the nature of a candidate's challenge and/or the authorized inclusive assessment arrangement might disturb other candidates during an examination, the candidate must take the examination in a separate room and be supervised according to the regulations governing the conduct of Diploma Programme examinations.

1.18 Written examinations must be invigilated according to the regulations governing the conduct of Diploma Programme examinations. The person invigilating 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.

1.19 Any issues that arise from the nature of the inclusive assessment arrangements, or any unforeseen difficulties encountered by the candidate, should be reported to IB Answers as soon as possible.