



## LAMAR ACADEMY INCLUSIVE EDUCATION (IE) POLICY

### PHILOSOPHY

Lamar Academy believes that all students should have the opportunity to reach their fullest potential - mentally, physically, emotionally and socially. The school recognizes that students have different needs, and some students will require different teaching and assessment approaches due to special education needs such as: gifted and talented identification; special learning issues; language, emotional and behavioral issues; physical, sensory and medical conditions; and mental health issues. As such, it is important that the IB programs at Lamar Academy provide the support necessary to help students achieve their highest potential. Our definition of inclusion in our school context is to provide tailored support so that students can access educational excellence. Our IE philosophy supports the school mission statement.

### MISSION

*The mission of the International Baccalaureate Program at Lamar Academy is to educate all students to become lifelong learners and caring, productive citizens in an ever-changing global society.*

*Through the employment of inquiry, community, and technology in a comprehensive, academically rigorous program of studies, students will develop into more knowledgeable individuals who understand the value of culture and open-mindedness in promoting a more peaceful world.*

Lamar Academy's primary mission is to meet the needs of all students by providing the appropriate support when making educational decisions on individual student responses to instruction. Our goal is to create a well-integrated/balanced system of instruction and intervention that will provide students with the vehicle to transition successfully from the public school setting to the community.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE IE POLICY**

Lamar Academy implements a diversity instruction approach, *Response to Intervention (RTI)*, which provides a plan designed to address individual student needs with the appropriate instructional accommodations needed for learning success. The goal of RTI is to intervene early – when students begin to struggle with learning – to prevent them from falling behind and developing learning difficulties. In consultation with educational specialists and parents, teachers design the optimal learning experiences for all students through modifications or an Individualized Intervention Plan (IIP).

At any point in the RTI process, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is designed to protect the rights of students with disabilities and to provide a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). State and Federal laws must be adhered to and the appropriate accommodations must be made. The United States government guarantees each child an education in the least restrictive environment which aligns to the IB philosophy. Inclusive education services address the individual needs of students with disabilities that may include individual or small group instruction, curriculum or teaching modifications/accommodations, physical/occupational/speech therapy, and regular classroom instruction, instruction through special teaching, or instruction through approved contracts. Instruction shall be supplemented by the provision of related services when appropriate. *Education Code 29.003(a)*

We, the staff at Lamar Academy, believe in the philosophy and tenets of the International Baccalaureate Programme. We provide for differentiated instruction and learning environments to provide an inclusive experience for students with special needs when educationally appropriate/applicable.

## **IE AND THE IB CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENTS**

The Diploma Programme and Middle Years Programme curriculum is prescriptive in procedures governing required assessments and curriculum scope.

### **Curriculum**

At Lamar Academy, the rigorous program of studies is carefully designed to ensure that students have sufficient preparation and time to complete all requirements. If specific arrangements or accommodations are suggested through an IIP or 504 (disability) designations, curriculum will be differentiated to address the students' needs as specified by the accommodations. These accommodations must be in compliance with IB assessment requirement guidelines.

Interventions are typified by the following strategies:

<b>CURRICULUM</b>	<b>STUDENT NEEDS</b>	<b>PROGRAM SUPPORTS</b>
Scaffold assignments	Preferential seating	Bridge Camp
Assistive technology	Structured activities	<i>Philos</i> peer mentoring
Peer working arrangements	Organizational strategies/planner	Tutoring Club peer tutoring
Alternative testing arrangements	Behavioral contracts	Academic counseling
Alternative assignments	Physical, visual or verbal cues	Individualized Course Certificate Program
Extended time for assignments	Parental communication/feedback	Student progress monitoring

### **Assessments**

IB assessments have specific time frames and deadlines that are specified by IB and arranged by the Lamar Academy faculty at the start of every year through development of an annual assessment calendar. This annual practice ensures that the various Internal Assessments are spread over the course of the year, giving students ample opportunity to complete all internal assessment requirements within the specified timelines.

External assessments for the Diploma Programme such as the Theory of Knowledge essay, extended essays, and the Language A/B oral and written assignments are also included in the annual assessment calendar and timelines are determined with consideration of IB established deadlines for submission of these components.

IB Diploma Programme Examination dates are determined by IB every year. These dates are adhered to by Lamar Academy.

### **IE CANDIDATES**

According to the IB document, *Candidates with special assessment needs (2011)*:

*The IB believes that all candidates should be allowed to demonstrate their ability under assessment conditions that are as fair as possible. Where standard assessment conditions could put a candidate with special educational needs at a disadvantage by preventing him or her from*

*demonstrating his or her level of attainment, special arrangements may be authorized. This policy applies to candidates affected by a temporary, long-term or permanent disability or illness, including candidates with a learning difficulty.*

The same document also stipulates that:

*1.4 The school, not the IB, is responsible for establishing whether the Diploma Programme can be taught and assessed. Advice may be sought from IB Cardiff before a school accepts a student with special needs; however, this advice is restricted to the implications for internal and external assessment and does not extend to teaching methods and resources.*

*2.1.1 Before accepting a student with special educational needs as a candidate for the Diploma Programme, coordinators should consider whether suitable arrangements, for both teaching and assessment, can be made for that student.*

In regards to the Middle Years Programme, the document *Rules for IB World Schools: Middle Years Programme (2011)* similarly stipulates that:

*5.4 It is the school's responsibility to determine whether it can enroll a student with special needs into the MYP. Schools must ensure that legal guardians and students themselves are aware of the special arrangements for assessment made by the IB Organization for students with special needs. A school must not make special arrangements for assessment without the IB Organization's prior approval.*

#### Lamar Academy will

- examine student data and information to provide appropriate recommendations and guidance to students and parents regarding our school's IB Programme
- provide teachers with all IIP and 504 documentation and inform teachers of any IIP or 504 updates
- provide appropriate accommodations as specified by the student's IIP or 504 plan
- make timely arrangements with IB for any student with special assessment needs
- provide professional development for teachers in the teaching and learning of students with special needs
- work with middle school counselors, nurses and parents to identify special needs during the transition to our school
- provide a school environment that is physically accessible to all students
- designate staff responsibilities regarding inclusion including: 504 coordinator (assistant principal), special education teacher, counselors, nurse

- access and utilize district-level expertise including screening for special needs when appropriate

#### Students will

- proactively seek assistance from their teachers, counselor and coordinator to meet their learning needs
- comply with adjustments/modifications and accommodations as specified in the IIP or 504 plan
- respect and meet deadlines, established and agreed upon

#### Parents will

- understand that their child(ren) must fulfill all the requirements for the Middle Years Programme or they will be at risk of not earning an MYP Certificate, and forfeit the opportunity to continue with the Diploma Programme
- understand that their child(ren) must fulfill all the requirements for the Diploma Programme or they will be at risk of not earning an IB Diploma at Lamar Academy
- help their child(ren) to respect and meet deadlines, established and agreed upon
- provide IIP or 504 documentation so that requests for special arrangements from IB can be submitted in a timely manner

### **REVIEW OF THE IE POLICY**

The IE Policy is reviewed annually at the beginning of the year by the Lamar Academy staff and administration. Amendments to the policy will be considered especially based changes/revisions to IB, the school district, the school community, or community needs.

#### **References:**

Adaptations from Michael E. Fossum Middle School SEN Policy (2012)

Adaptations from Henrico County Public Schools SEN Policy (2010-2011)

Rules for IB World Schools: Middle Years Programme (2011)

Special Educational Needs within the International Baccalaureate Programmes (2010)

McAllen ISD Equal Educational Opportunity (2010)

Diploma Programme Candidates with Special Assessment Needs (2011)

McAllen ISD Special Education Procedural Requirements (2009)