

Inclusion Policy

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INTRODUCTION

The Canadian International School of Hefei (CISH) welcomes all students, yet acknowledges its limitations in accommodating students with certain exceptionalities requiring extensive support. To accurately evaluate learning needs, new enrollees undergo a two-week probationary period. Should an unmanageable exceptionality be identified post-probation, the student will be redirected to an institution better equipped to meet their needs.

To ensure comprehensive support for all students, it is imperative for guardians to consent to the school's recommended assessments. Non-compliance may result in referral to another educational institution.

For specialized support inquiries or to discuss the accommodation of specific exceptionalities, please contact the school administration.

PHILOSOPHY AND PURPOSE OF THE INCLUSION POLICY

CISH's inclusion philosophy aligns with our foundational tenets of "Respect and dignity for all individuals" and "The efficacy of collaboration and cooperative learning."

The objective of the CISH Inclusion Policy is to optimize opportunities for students with exceptionalities to make academic and personal progress, build self-efficacy, and cultivate the skills necessary for independent, intrinsically motivated, lifelong learning.

Inclusion, within the context of this policy, is characterized as "a pervasive culture of collaboration that fosters inquiry and problem-solving, ensuring equitable access to the curriculum and



equipping students with the requisite support to establish and achieve rigorous educational goals." (Adapted from Principles Into Practice, IBO, 2014)

Herein, the term "exceptionalities" encompasses a range of dimensions, including academic performance and socio-emotional well-being.

NOTE ON LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Within Hefei, China, there are no statutory mandates concerning the inclusion of diverse learners, neurodiverse individuals, or students with established Individualized Action Plans (IAPs). CISH voluntarily adheres to inclusion practices as delineated in subsequent sections of this policy, the CISH Language Policy, and the CISH Assessment Policy, all designed to cater to the diverse needs of our student body.

OBJECTIVES OF THE INCLUSION POLICY

The Inclusion Policy at CISH is steered by the leadership of the Board of Directors, the Head of School, Vice-Principals for Elementary and Middle/High levels, IB Coordinators, and the Guidance Counselor, who are collectively responsible for achieving the following objectives:

1. Maximize curriculum access for students with exceptionalities based on individual capabilities.
2. Cultivate collective accountability among professional staff in endorsing the Inclusion Policy at all educational levels.
3. Enable the Guidance Counselor's participation in decision-making through PYP, MYP, and DP meetings.
4. Uphold equal opportunities for learners with exceptionalities.
5. Align the Inclusion Policy with the school's core beliefs.
6. Encourage teaching staff to maintain high expectations for all students.
7. Tailor support to students' specific needs for successful curriculum outcomes.
8. Champion differentiated instruction to facilitate comprehensive access to curricular and extracurricular activities.
9. Encourage collaborative planning and instructional practices in support of inclusive education.
10. Cultivate an inclusive atmosphere that fosters students' self-confidence and esteem, where students feel valued and are empowered to learn without fear of error.
11. Forge partnerships with external professionals and agencies for identification, assessment, and specialized support for students with exceptionalities (see Guidance Handbook for further information).

Accountability for the effective implementation of this policy resides with the Head of School and the Elementary and Middle/High Principals, who will keep the governing body duly informed.



ADMISSIONS POLICY AND INCLUSION

CISH's Admissions Policy delineates the criteria for student enrollment. While we endeavor to accommodate various learning needs, there may be limitations due to resource constraints. These constraints may preclude the enrollment of students with Autism Spectrum Disorders, severe sensory impairments, Down Syndrome, or other moderate-to-severe neurological conditions.

Prior to admitting students with identified exceptionalities, the Admissions Department will engage in consultations with PYP, MYP, and DP administrators to assess the feasibility of offering appropriate academic programs.

It is imperative that parents disclose all pertinent information about their child's special needs and medical history, including comprehensive medical reports, to facilitate an informed enrollment decision. Individual assessments will be made at the time of application, considering the resources required and parental commitment to supporting the child's educational journey.

ASSESSMENT POLICY AND INCLUSION

CISH's Assessment Policy allows for the utilization of diverse assessment methodologies. Customizable rubrics and modified expectations are available for students with exceptionalities to ensure equitable evaluation.

LANGUAGE POLICY AND INCLUSION

Recognizing that the majority of our students are English as an Additional Language (EAL) learners, CISH has implemented robust support mechanisms. Our EAL program aims to assist students with language-related needs.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY AND INCLUSION

CISH places a premium on academic integrity, a principle communicated to both students and parents through multiple avenues. All students are mandated to comply with our academic integrity policy. In an effort to foster academic honesty, educators at CISH integrate checkpoints within assessments to monitor student progress and resource utilization. Throughout substantial assessment projects, the faculty emphasizes the importance of accurate citation and referencing. Tailored support is extended to students with exceptionalities to facilitate comprehension of their academic responsibilities.

ADDRESSING EXCEPTIONALITIES

Exceptionalities may manifest due to various factors such as evolving curriculum expectations, altered learning velocities, absenteeism, acclimatization to new educational settings, or specific learning or linguistic needs. Provision is also made to stimulate advanced learners to reach elevated academic milestones.

When an educator identifies a potential need for assessment for exceptionalities, the guidance counselor and corresponding principal are consulted to devise an appropriate action plan.

The guidance counselor, in collaboration with the pertinent principal and subject teachers, will employ the following methods to identify exceptionalities:

- Consultations with parents and teachers



- Examination of prior educational records
- Documented classroom observations
- Parental referrals for formal evaluations by educational psychologists, when necessary
- Seeking specialized input from educational psychologists or external agencies, as required

Upon evidence collection, a multi-disciplinary meeting is convened, led by the guidance counselor or the appropriate principal. The meeting involves the relevant coordinator, homeroom or subject teachers, principals, guidance counselor, parents, and the student to draft a responsive action plan. This plan delineates the student's learning objectives, methods for achievement, responsible staff, and evaluation timeline, all within the scope of available resources.

In instances where CISH lacks the resources to adequately accommodate a student's exceptionalities, a transfer to an alternative educational setting may be necessitated. Documentation of the action plan will be archived in the student's academic file.

PROGRAM OF STUDY

To address the distinct needs of each exceptional learner, programs of study may incorporate recommendations from formal assessments conducted by educational psychologists. These programs aim to align with students' individual learning styles and employ multi-sensory methods. Consistent with the IB Continuum, teachers will endeavor to use inquiry-based programs as a framework for providing targeted skill development. Additionally, certain programs of study may include a counseling component to further support the student's overall well-being. Teachers can facilitate this development through the Continuum and New Brunswick curricula and, when necessary, informal counseling sessions.

The IB Diploma Program provides specific accommodations for IB DP Examinations, based on medical or educational psychological evaluations. Requests for such accommodations must be submitted through the IB Diploma Program Coordinator, following the guidelines established by the IBO, at least 18 months prior to the examination session.

POLICY REVIEW PROCESS

This policy undergoes a biennial review led by the school's pedagogical leadership team. Any proposed amendments, reflective of emerging research, updated source documents, or suggestions for improving the policy's efficacy, will be solicited from the broader school community—comprising teachers, parents, students (where appropriate), and board members—prior to implementation.

Note: The latest review of this policy was carried out in September 2023.



WORK CITED

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