

# AMERICAN CREATIVITY ACADEMY IB INCLUSION POLICY

## American Creativity Academy

### IB Inclusion / Special Education Needs Policy

#### Purpose, mission, and beliefs

A. Purpose of the inclusion / special education needs policy

The Inclusion/Special Education Needs policy is a dynamic document developed by a committee of teachers, coordinators and administrators. This document is consistent with the IBDP standards providing a common understanding of inclusion/special education needs of our students and at the same time providing equal opportunities for students to have access to the IBDP program.

B. Mission of the American Creativity Academy

The American Creativity Academy is a private school that delivers a standards-based American curriculum within an environment in which Islamic values are respected and practiced. The school is dedicated to preparing students for university success.

C. Mission of the International Baccalaureate

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organization works with schools, governments, and international organizations to develop challenging programs of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programs encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

D. Core Beliefs

We believe:

- Practicing Islamic values develops a character with honesty, integrity, and responsible behavior.
- Education requires a partnership among parents, students, and staff.
- Students learn and thrive in a healthy, safe, and caring environment.
- In challenging students to think critically and creatively.
- In developing the whole child – intellectually, spiritually, socially, and physically.
- In preparing students to contribute constructively to a global society.
- Effective communication is essential for cohesive school community and a positive school climate.
- Learning is a life-long process.
- In inspiring excellence.

## **Candidates with learning support requirements (LSR) at ACA**

As per its licensure, ACA is legally not **allowed** to offer services to students that have medical learning impairments. The ministry provides a different license for special needs schools, and once a school has that license, it must make accommodations regarding class size, available learning aids, and the like.

We do, however, offer learning supports to other classes of students. Candidates with learning support requirements at ACA are students who need different strategies or adaptations of the curriculum to meet their learning needs. These candidates could be:

- English Language Learners
- Students who need counseling
- Enrichment or honors students

## **IB inclusion program goals**

The goals of our inclusion program are:

- To share the responsibility of the growth of students in all aspects.
- To create a positive environment to enhance the learning of the students.
- To provide access to all students to the curriculum through inclusion and differentiation.
- To measure growth of students through formative and summative assessments to give constructive feedback to students.

## **Learning diversity in the IB programme**

### **a. Inclusion**

Inclusion is an ongoing process that aims to increase access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers. Inclusion is the learner profile in action, an outcome of dynamic learning communities (IBO, 2010).

Inclusion is implemented in different ways in ACA depending on the student and his/her need. In some cases, inclusion is implemented by giving extra time to students to complete their work or extra support provided to the student. The common goal is to have all students have access to the same curriculum.

### **b. Differentiation**

Differentiation is seen as a process of identifying, with each learner, the most effective strategies for achieving agreed goals (IBO, 2010). Differentiation is a group of strategies and techniques teachers use with students to reach to their learning potential.

Teachers focus on the process of learning that makes the difference in the students' learning along with the different resources used to help reach their learning potential.

### **c. Four principles of good practice**

The goal of having four principles is to promote equal access to curriculum for all learners across the curriculum (IBO, 2010).

1. Affirming identity and building self-esteem

Affirming the identity of a learner encourages the qualities, attitudes and characteristics identified in the IB learner profile, promoting responsible citizenship and international-mindedness (IBO, 2010).

At ACA, the learner profile is a working document that teachers address in their everyday teaching. The learner profile becomes the set of characteristics we want to see in our students.

2. Valuing prior knowledge

As a common understanding from IB, teachers and students know that new learning and understanding is constructed on previous experiences and conceptual understandings in a developmental continuum (IBO, 2010).

The students who come into IBDP have covered non-IB courses that prepare them to the IBDP. Teachers are expected to know the prior knowledge of the students and accordingly plan for the new learning.

3. Scaffolding

Scaffolding is a temporary strategy that enables learners to accomplish a task that would otherwise be impossible or much more difficult to accomplish (IBO, 2010). Through scaffolding, students are given the opportunity to be independent and hence increase their self-confidence.

Small changes in the instructions and the methods used with certain students can change the students' way of understanding the concept.

4. Extended learning

Teaching and learning do not only happen in the classroom. At ACA, teachers encourage the students to extend their learning outside of the classroom. Students are encouraged to read and write sophisticated texts and hence extend their learning experience. Teachers always set higher expectations and support the students to achieve these expectations.

### **The process of identification of LSR candidates**

ACA has Child Study Team (CST) procedures that enable the identification of the candidates that have learning support requirements. The Child Study Team consists of the guidance counselor, college counselor, teachers and the IB coordinator.

## **Rights and Responsibilities of the School Community**

### Rights

- Communication of the policy to the community  
The SEN Policy is available to teachers and parents. The policy is shared with the teachers at the beginning of every academic year. Parents of LSR candidates also have access to the SEN policy.
- Access to an equal education  
All students at ACA are granted equal access to meeting curricular standards. In lower grades, students that require additional support have access to interventionists that offer tailored assistance. In all grades, teachers are required to remain after school 30 minutes daily to assist students in need.

### Responsibilities

- Develop Tailored Interventions  
  
Teachers meet quarterly to review student academic performance results and develop targeted learning interventions accordingly. Those interventions are to be implemented in classrooms, reviewed periodically for impact on learning, and altered if necessary.  
  
By utilizing PBIS, administrators, teachers, students, parents, and counselors work together to make Tier II behavioral supports for students that need more intensive and specific supports than the remaining school population.
- Implement Tailored Interventions  
  
Students, Parents, Teachers, and Administrators are responsible to upholding their particular commitment for student academic and behavioral success. Follow-up meetings are held for both academic and behavioral interventions to make sure the student is making progress according to plan.

**Policy creation**

The SEN policy is created by the efforts of teachers, the IB coordinator, IB assistant coordinators and administrators.

**Review process**

The SEN will be reviewed every five years, during the evaluation process of IBDP.

**References**

The SEN policy should be used along with the Learner Profile, Assessment policy, Language policy and the Academic Honesty policy.

## Bibliography

IBO, 2010. *Learning Diversity in the International Baccalaureate programmes*. Cardiff: IBO.

IBO, 2010. *Special Educational needs within the International Baccalaureate Programmes*. United Kingdom: IBO.