

NOGALES HIGH SCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION-IB PROGRAMME POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

RATIONALE

Nogales High School strives to ensure that all students are provided with the support necessary to allow them to achieve academic success and reach their full potential as members of NHS and NHS Diploma Program. This rationale is supported by the Nogales High School Mission Statement: “By working as a team within a positive environment, all students will be successful, responsible, culturally and internationally appreciative critical thinkers.”

AMERICAN SPECIAL EDUCATION STATUTES

General Requirements

The legislation relating directly and indirectly to individuals with disabilities, particularly children and youth is numerous in the United States. The most important laws are the following:

- **IDEA**—the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act: IDEA, the Individual with Disabilities Education Act, is a United States’ special education law. The IDEA guides how states, school districts, and public agencies provide early intervention, special education and related services to eligible infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities.
- **NCLB**—No Child Left Behind Act: The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, Public Law (PL) 107-110, is the latest general education law. It amends the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and has brought sweeping changes to US educational systems.
- **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act**: Section 504 of this Act plays an important role in education, especially for students with disabilities who may not qualify for special education services under IDEA.
- **Americans with Disabilities Act – The ADA**: is the first comprehensive declaration of equality for people with disabilities. The ADA protects the civil rights of people with disabilities in all aspects of employment, in accessing public services such as transportation, and guaranteeing access to public accommodations such as restaurants, stores, hotels and other types of buildings to which the public has access.
- **Assistive Technology Act**: Assistive technology can greatly improve the access and function of people with disabilities in school, work, home, and community. The Assistive Technology Act is intended to ensure that people with disabilities have access to assistive technology devices and services.

Requirements for Private Schools

The USDE Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) provides guidance regarding the obligations of States and local education agencies (LEA) to parentally-placed private school children with disabilities under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA 2004) regulations, effective October 13, 2006. The focus of the OSEP guidance is to provide assistance to states and local education agencies in complying with associated requirements of IDEA 2004 regulations including: (1) agency responsibility for providing equitable special education and related services to parentally-placed private school children with disabilities, and (2) determination of proportionate amount of Federal funds to be expended by an LEA for such children attending private schools located in their district. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) Division of IDEA Coordination has developed additional guidance specific to Texas in a question and answer format.

DEFINITION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

A student has special educational needs if she/he:

- Has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of the student of the same age/class; or
- Has a disability which prevents or hinders the student from making use of an educational facility of a kind generally provided for students of the same age in school within the school; or
- Has a disability which prevents or hinders the student from learning or performing compared to students of the same age within the school.

A Student must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language spoken of the home is different from the language of the school.

SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS POLICY GOALS AT NOGALES HIGH SCHOOL

The main goals of this policy are:

- To follow the national and local laws regarding Special Education;
- To create a welcoming environment for the special education needs of each student;
- To ensure that the special needs of students are identified early, assessed, and provided for;
- To clarify expectations of families, faculty, administration, and students;
- To identify faculty role and responsibilities;
- To enable all students to have full access to all elements of the school curriculum and assessment policy.

Faculty, staff and administration acknowledge that:

- Students have different educational and learning needs, abilities, profile and aspirations;
- Differentiation and scaffolding promote effective learning;
- Students gain knowledge and skills at different rates through different means;
- Students are all capable and unique;
 - Students are lifelong learners;
- The school is welcoming all students.

IDENTIFICATION, ASSESSMENT, AND PROVISION

All documents regarding students' identification, assessment and provision will be placed in his/ her file. Only the head of school, the IB coordinator, and the counselor can access student files.

Graduated Response

Nogales High School will adopt a graduated response to meeting special educational needs that requires the initial use of classroom and school resources before referring the student to a specialist or to encourage parents to have their child tested by the public school district.

Early Concerns

Student progress is regularly monitored and reviewed by faculty. Concerns registered by parents and/or teachers and/or staff members are addressed by appropriate differentiation within the classroom and a record is kept of strategies used.

Differentiation Model

NHS defines differentiated instruction as follow.

In a differentiated classroom, teachers:

- Differentiate content. Content differentiation varies what is taught and how it is taught;
- Differentiate process. It involves providing students with varied opportunities to process or make sense of the content;
- Differentiate product. It involves allowing students to show, in varied ways, what they know, understand and are able to do.

The differentiation process addresses the major ways students seems to vary:

- By Interest: Interest refers to both general interests that a student has and specific interest she or he might find in a topic or a subject;
- By learning profile: It includes a number of concept related to how a students is best at learning: learning style, culture, gender, environmental preferences;
- By readiness: It refers to a complex set of factors that affect the level of difficulty at which students

are ready to learn and the rate at which they grow. It includes ability, emotional and physical well-being.

Key Qualities of Differentiation

Five principles have been identified as the key for high-quality of differentiation:

- Welcoming and safe class environment;
- High quality curriculum;
- Ongoing assessment;
- Respectful activities;
- Flexible grouping.

School Action

A student is at School Action Plan stage when he/she is identified as needing additional attention n supplement of what has been provided in the classroom. The triggers for school intervention will be concern, backed by evidence, about a student who despite receiving differentiated learning opportunities makes:

- Little or no progress;
- Shows signs of difficulty in developing key skills, which result in poor grades in some curriculum areas;
- Presents emotional or behavioral difficulties, which are not ameliorated by the behavior management techniques employed by the school;
- Has diagnosed learning differences or impairment.

In some cases, outside professional from health or social services may already be involved with the student. The IB coordinator or the school counselor will contact them. If authorized by the parents or legal guardians, support for the student will be discussed, and action will be taken.

In some cases, students already have an Individual Educational Plan (IEP). The IB coordinator or the counselor will communicate, with the parent or legal guardian's' authorization, the recommendation of the IEP to the teachers and staff.

When a student has been identified as in need of more support, the whole educational team will meet to decide what course of action to take.

- Homework help
- Academic tutoring
- Provision of a teacher-advisor

Individual Educational Plan (IEP)

As a result of an IEP from private or public health or social agencies and in consultation with the parents or guardians, external support could be granted by the school in cooperation with the faculty. These agencies will provide advice on setting appropriate help, strategies and activities. In some case, the counselor or the IB coordinator can ask the parents or the guardians to seek the advice of a specialist or a private or public health agency.

Special Educational Needs and Accommodation for Assessment

Ongoing assessment will be differentiated according to the teachers. For major tests, IB external and internal assessment, the IBO authorize the school, under certain conditions, to proceed to “Special Arrangements” regarding testing. In any case, a professional assessment, not older than two years old, must be provided to the school and to the IB organization. No special arrangement will be done without these documents and only the IB organization is authorized to allow “Special Arrangements”. When granted, these arrangements may include:

- Academic accommodations documented on the child’s IEP
- modification to exam papers;
- Extension to deadlines;
- Assistance with practical work;
- Additional time;
- Rest periods;
- Information and communication technology;
- Scribe and transcription;
- Readers.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities of the School

- Provide training for staff and faculty to successfully implement and support the SEN and differentiated instruction;
- Raise staff awareness of the needs of students identified as Students with Special Education needs;
- Ensure staff compliance with federal and local laws regarding students with disabilities;
- Provide resources for the implementation of the policy.

Responsibilities of the DP coordinator

- Follow federal and local laws regarding Students with Educational needs;
- Work collaboratively with faculty to support students with special needs;
- Elaborate with the teachers’ Individual Education Plan for students with educational needs or students

who are struggling;

- Fill out and send the D1 and D2 forms to the International Baccalaureate Organization;
 - Maintain records;
 - At enrollment, advise parents of the rigorous program requirements to ensure appropriate placement.
- Communicate key documents such as *Candidate with Special Assessment Needs*.

Responsibilities of the faculty

These responsibilities are included in the document: “Teachers & Staff Expectations” that is distributed at the beginning of the year and is part of the faculty annual evaluation. In this policy, only the elements referring to Students with Educational Needs have been included. In addition, teachers will:

- Comply with federal and local laws regarding Special education;
- Participate in trainings when available;
- Identify struggling learners within the classroom and refer these students to the coordinator;
- Implement appropriate interventions and doctor recommendations;
- Maintain accurate records of student’s progress.

Parent Responsibilities

Parents of children with special educational needs are treated as partners. They should be supported so as to be able to:

- Recognize and fulfill their responsibilities as parents and play an active role in their child’s education;
- Have knowledge of their child’s entitlement within the Policy;
- Have access to information, advice, support.

To make communication effective with the school, parents should:

- Communicate to the school all documents regarding their child’s special educational needs;
- Communicate with the school any changes regarding those needs.

Students Responsibilities

Student’s views are always ascertained. In order to participate in decision making, students can work toward (with adult encouragements):

- Expressing their feelings and their needs;
- Participating in discussions;
- Indicating choices;
- Ask for information and support.

RESOURCES

- Teaching Students with Particular Special Educational and Learning Needs - a Resource for the School, IBO, 2004
- Towards a Continuum of International Education, IBO, 2008
- Candidates with Special Assessment Needs, IBO, 2013
- Differentiation in Practice: A Resource Guide for Differentiating Curriculum, Grades 9-12, Carol A. Tomlinson (Author), Cindy A. Strickland (Author), 2005, ASCD
 - ⤴ Special Education Needs Policy of Dallas International School, Dallas, Texas.
 - ⤴ Special Education Needs Policy of Foothill High School, Bakersfield, California.