



Wayside: Sci-Tech High School International Baccalaureate Inclusion/Special Needs Policy (Updated January 2021)

Wayside: Sci-Tech High School Diploma Programme's philosophy of inclusion

Wayside: Sci-Tech High School is a tuition-free, college prep, public charter school accredited by the Texas Education Agency and the Texas State Board of Education. It's also a member of TIBS (Texas IB Schools). Sci-Tech High School exists to prepare College Ready, Community Engaged, Global Citizens. Sci-Tech High School's Diploma Programme is an Open Access Programme. Information about the IB Diploma Programme is given to scholars, parents, and guardians during an annual IB night. This information will highlight the advantages and benefits of pursuing the full Diploma Programme. This presentation is given in both English and Spanish in order to best meet the needs of our diverse student body. Scholars who have made the decision, along with their parent/guardian/caregiver consent, to join the Diploma Programme are welcome to do so. In keeping with that policy, scholars with special needs are equally encouraged to pursue their academic ambitions by joining the Diploma Programme. Every scholar is encouraged to exemplify the attributes of the IB learner profile. Through carefully chosen and planned curriculum and instruction, all scholars are introduced to a variety of cultures, diverse viewpoints and various perspectives to help them become open-minded, reflective lifelong learners.

The purpose of this document is to inform stakeholders of:

- Federal and State Laws that apply to the Special Needs population
- Define Scholar with Special Education Needs
- How scholar eligibility is determined
- The roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders
- Accommodations and modifications

Federal and State Laws

- **IDEA-** Individuals with Disabilities Act: IDEA, the Individuals with Disabilities Act, is The United States' special education law. The IDEA guides how we provide related services to eligible children and youth with disabilities.

- **ADA-** Americans with Disabilities Act: Gives civil rights to those with disabilities in employment, public accommodations, transportation, state and local government services and telecommunications.
- **NCLB-** No Child Left Behind. The No Child Left Behind Act became law in 2002 and contains the largest change to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) since it was enacted in 1965. NCLB measures school success by scholar achievement. The Act contains the following four basic education reform principles: stronger accountability, increased flexibility and local control, more options for parents, and an emphasis on evidence--based teaching
- **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act-** “No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States, as defined in section 705(20) of this title, shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance”
- **Texas Education Code--TAC,** Title 19, Chapter 89.

What is meant by Special Needs

Special needs of scholars vary and include, but are not exclusively:

- Specific learning disabilities (including dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyspraxia , information processing difficulties).
- Physical challenges (fine motor challenges, cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, other).
- Communication and speech difficulties (specific language impairment - receptive and/or expressive, auditory processing difficulties, fluency disorders - stuttering and/or stammering, verbal dyspraxia/apraxia, other).
- Sensory challenges (visual, hearing, other).
- Social emotional and behavioral difficulties (attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, personality disturbances, emotional disturbances - eating disorders, depression, excessive stress reaction, other).
- Mental health challenges (depression, anxiety, obsessive compulsive, post traumatic stress, other).
- Autism Spectrum (autism, Asperger's syndrome, pervasive developmental disorders, other).
- Medical challenges (diabetes, cancer, accident resulting in injury, asthma, cystic fibrosis, epilepsy, rheumatoid conditions, other).
- Others not specified above.

Eligibility

Scholar eligibility for special education will be determined by applying the following procedure:

- a. Parents may request a Full and Individualized Evaluation (FIE) of a child at any time.
- b. Teachers may request a FIE of a scholar by providing documentation of concerns that may relate to a disability to the school's Scholar Support Team.
 - Proof of documentation includes:
 - consistently poor achievement on state assessments
 - running records providing proof of difficulty in mastering concepts
 - documentation of any and all accommodations or modifications to instruction that have been tried in class and an account of the success or failure of the accommodations or modifications
 - documentation provided by the parents from a physician
- c. Once a request has been made, a meeting between the Special Education department, an administrator, a parent and at least one (1) general education teacher will occur to give permission to conduct the evaluation. Parents must give permission in writing for the evaluation to occur.
- d. Once permission is given, the FIE will be completed no more than 30 days after being approved.
- e. Upon completion of the FIE, an Admission Review and Dismissal (ARD) committee will convene to review the results of the evaluation and determine if the scholar is eligible for services.
- f. Once the ARD committee determines a scholar qualifies for services, they will determine the appropriate placement of the scholar in accordance with the IDEA's Least Restrictive Environment policy.

Accommodations

There are a number of ways scholars can receive accommodations to satisfy their unique academic, physical, emotional or other needs and allow them to be successful in their academic studies. Accommodations and modifications are available to all scholars with an IEP on an as needed basis and will be determined by the ARD committee. Scholars who are in the 504 program are eligible for instructional accommodations that are determined by the 504 committee. These may include but are not limited to the following:

- Working with the Special Education department, scholars who are assigned Individual Educational Plans (IEPs) are granted the accommodations or modifications in the classroom that their plans dictate.
- Working with the 504 Coordinator, scholars who are assigned 504 plans are granted the accommodations in the classroom that their plans dictate.
- Scholars with temporary physical or emotional difficulties brought on by an accident, personal or family trauma, or other such impacting event, can work with their counselor to seek a temporary academic plan to address their current and temporary needs.
- Scholars with difficulties that do not qualify for an IEP, a 504 or a temporary accommodation as spelled out above can also petition their counselor, the DP Coordinator or their teachers directly to ask for an intervention that creates fair and equitable access to academic opportunities. In such cases the counselor or coordinator will consider the request and, if warranted, petition the teachers with specific suggested short or long term accommodations.
- Modification of course curriculum.
- Frequent breaks.
- Reduced assignments.
- Access to a special education resource room for individualized assistance.
- Use of technology.
- Read aloud on request.
- Additional time on state standardized assessment.

Scholars who receive accommodations from Sci-Tech's Special Education department AND who utilize those accommodations in their Diploma Programme classrooms must apply for those accommodations to be applied to IBO end of year testing. Such accommodations include but are not limited to:

- Extended time
- Separate setting
- Use of laptop for testing

Roles and Responsibilities of the Stakeholders

A stakeholder shall be defined as anyone who has an interest in the education of the scholar with disabilities. This can include but is not limited to: faculty and staff, parents and scholars.

Responsibilities of the Faculty, DP Faculty and Staff

- The classroom teacher/IB teacher will be responsible for implementing all accommodations and modifications deemed appropriate by the ARD committee or 504 Committee with the help of the special education teachers as needed.
- The special education team will maintain accurate records of scholar's progress on their Individualized Education Plan (IEP).
- The 504 Coordinator will maintain accurate records of scholar's progress on their 504 plan.
- All faculty and staff will be responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of individuals being provided special education services and 504 services.
- Inform DP Coordinator of scholar in-class use of assigned accommodations.
- Inform DP Coordinator, SPED department, and/or 504 Coordinator of perception of scholar need of one or more accommodations.

Responsibilities of the IB DP Coordinator

- Request from the Special Education Coordinator/504 Coordinator a list of scholars who have IEPs and 504 plans.
- Request from parents and scholars the need for accommodations in accordance with the above documentation or for other documented reasons.
- Apply to the IBO for accommodations for the current testing session.

Responsibilities of Special Needs/504 Coordinators/department:

- Supply DP Coordinator with names of DP scholars with IEPs and 504 plans at the beginning of Senior year.
- Support DP Coordinator with evaluation of individual scholar's needs on a case by case basis.

Responsibilities of scholar

- Advocate for individual accommodations and academic needs.
- Scholars will be actively involved (when age appropriate) in the planning on their IEP or 504 plan and the accommodations/modifications.
- Scholars will actively participate in their classes to the best of their ability.

Responsibilities of parent(s)/guardian(s)/caregiver(s)

- Inform Special Education department or 504 Coordinator of need for specific academic accommodations.
- Send medical, psychological documentation to DP Coordinator for submission to IBO.
- Parents will participate in the planning of their child's IEP or 504 plan and accommodations/modifications.

- Parents will inform the school of all information and provide all documentation regarding their scholar's special education needs.
- Parents will inform the school of any changes to their scholar's special educational needs.

Inclusion/Special Needs Policy Review Process

This document was created and reviewed by the Special Education Coordinator, 504 Coordinator, IB Coordinator, in conjunction with IB support materials. The Wayside: Sci-Tech High School Committee will evaluate it every 2 years.

Resources

Access and inclusion policy, 2018.

Learning diversity and inclusion in IB programmes: Removing barriers to learning, 2016 (Updated May 2020).

Programme Standards and Practices, 2018, (updated April 2020).

Diploma Programme: From principles into practice, 2015.