

MYP (GRADES 6-10) INCLUSION POLICY

The International Baccalaureate Organization's (IBO) definition of students with learning support requirements²:

Students with learning support requirements, as defined by the IB, may:

- Display difficulties or live with conditions that are a barrier to learning and therefore need particular teaching strategies for classroom management and effective education.
- Display a higher than average aptitude in one or more subjects that requires adaptation and extension of the curriculum.

Students with learning support requirements, as defined by the IB, may:

- Have the aptitude to meet all curriculum and assessment requirements but require support to reach their full potential in learning and assessment.
- Require support to access teaching and learning including planned strategies to access curricular instruction and inclusive assessment arrangements to access assessment.

Our Philosophy of Inclusion

Morris Jeff Community School is committed to diversity in education and to providing a learning environment that is child-centered and fosters personal, creative and academic excellence. We believe inclusive environments are the best environments for students to learn and grow. All students learn best when they learn with peers from a variety of backgrounds and experiences. Daily interactions between students with differences build our students' empathy for others, increase their ability to see others' perspectives, and allow our students to understand cultures different from their own. At Morris Jeff Community School, we believe that inclusion does not just apply to students with disabilities, but all students that require support to develop their talents fully. We believe that all Morris Jeff staff have a shared responsibility for the success of all students' regardless of their needs. The teachers, student support staff and teaching assistants collaborate with each other and deliver instruction effectively using research-based strategies and instructional models that support inclusion, including the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL). The school utilizes the Student Support Matrix Tool to determine staffing needs for students with exceptionalities.

This policy was developed by the Student Support Committee.

At Morris Jeff Community School, we believe that inclusion does not just apply to students with disabilities, but all students that require support *to develop their talents fully*.

These students include, but are not limited to:

- Students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs)
- Student with 504 plans
- Students who speak languages other than English at home
- Students from poverty
- Students in need of counseling support
- Students with academic and/or behavior challenges
- Students that are high achieving and/or gifted

We Believe Inclusion Is:

“A school-wide belief system in which diversity is viewed as a rich resource for everyone rather than a problem to overcome...Inclusion means that we help all children learn and participate in meaningful ways.”³

Our Guiding Principles for Inclusion⁴:

1. All students attend the school to which they would go if they had no disability.
2. A natural proportion of students at our school and in our classrooms are representative of both our school population and the population of our community.
3. A zero-rejection philosophy – meaning no student is excluded based on disability.
4. Placements are age and grade appropriate with no permanent, self-contained special education classes.
5. Cooperative learning and peer instructional methods receive significant usage in classrooms.
6. Special education supports are provided in integrated environments.

The Relationship between IBO, MJCS and Inclusion:

The IBO aims⁵ to “encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people with their differences, can also be right.” We believe for our students to understand *other people with their differences*, students must interact and learn from and alongside students from different backgrounds and perspectives. At MJCS, we practice intentional inclusion of students from our community.

Our Inclusion Goals Are:

- To create a welcoming environment for all students and their families regardless of learning needs
- To guide all students towards academic and social independence
- To develop faculty, staff and the school community’s mindsets and skills for creating inclusive learning environments

To meet those goals, we must model and embrace the IB Learner Profile Attributes of

- Communicator

- Risk-Taker
- Open-Minded

We are All responsible for Inclusion:

All MJCS faculty, staff, students and students' families are responsible for modeling and exhibiting IB Learner Profile Attributes and supporting inclusion of all MJCS students.

The Principal, Director of Student Support Services, Director of Finances and Operations, and Development Director are responsible for raising funds, budgeting and allocating school resources to support all students developing their talents fully.

The 504 Coordinator, Curriculum Coordinators, English Language Learner (ELL) Teachers, and Response to Intervention (RTI) Team are responsible for developing staff skills at delivering instruction and ensuring resources are efficiently and effectively used to support all students developing their talents fully.

The Subject Area Teachers, Special Education Teachers, and Teaching Assistants are responsible for collaborating with each other and delivering instruction effectively using the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) that supports all students developing their talents fully.

The Dean of Students, Counselors, Nurse, and Related Service Providers are responsible for supporting students and teachers in developing students' talents fully.

Our Process for Identifying Students in Need of Additional Learning Supports:

- Use a universal screening assessment(s) and other academic and behavior data for all students to determine students who may need learning supports
- Hold a meeting coordinated by the RTI team to determine a) if learning supports are needed and b) the type of learning supports needed
- Monitor student progress after learning supports are put in place
- Review student progress after a length of time decided by the RTI team to determine if the learning supports are leading to student success

Common additional learning supports include but are not limited to:

- Differentiation of classwork
- Extra instruction or attention within a subject area class
- Additional language or math small group classes
- Functional Behavior Assessments and Behavior Intervention Plans

- Referral to outside community programs and supports
- Health plans

Our Process for Identifying Students with Disabilities

At Morris Jeff Community School, we follow both the Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) ⁶ and guidelines along with Louisiana's Bulletin 1508⁷ for identifying students with disabilities. Upon determination of a student's disability, the IEP team will determine what special instruction is needed for a student to develop their talents fully. The Louisiana Department of Education⁸ explains an Individualized Education Program as the following:

Schools provide a personal written plan, called an Individualized Education Program, for every student with disabilities. The plan includes:

- Present levels of academic achievement and functional performance,
- Measurable annual goals,
- Reports of progress on the annual goals,
- Special education and related services and supplementary aids and services,
- Degree of nonparticipation in regular class and extracurricular activities,
- Accommodations and modifications on state and district assessments,
- Frequency, location, beginning and duration of services and modifications, and
- Measurable post-secondary goals, transition services and transfer of rights statement

Students with disabilities are supported by a team that includes:

- One or both parents/guardians
- One or more of the student's teachers including special education case manager
- An official designated representative from the school

Common special instruction includes but is not limited to:

- Accommodated supports and materials
- Modification of materials and standards
- Individualized scheduling
- Assistive technology
- Special instruction (within the general education classroom and in a resource setting)
- Special education consultation with subject area teachers
- Teaching assistant support or instruction
- Related services such as occupational, speech or physical therapy
- Adapted Physical Education instruction

This Inclusion Policy was developed by a team of Morris Jeff Community School administrators, teachers, and teaching assistants. This Policy will be reviewed yearly by MYP staff.

Citations for Documents Used to Create the Morris Jeff Community School Inclusion Policy

1. "Morris Jeff Community School - Vision." Morris Jeff Community School. N.p., n.d. Web. 02 June 2016
2. MYP: From Principles to Practice. International Baccalaureate Organization, May 2015. Web.
3. Valle, Jan W., and David J. Connor. "Chapter 4 - Practicing Educational Equity in a Democracy." *Rethinking Disability: A Disability Studies Approach to Inclusive Practices*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 2011. N. pag. Print
4. Sailor, Wayne. "Special Education in the Restructured School." *Remedial and Special Education* 12.6 (1991): 8-22. Web. (Guiding principles were adapted from this article)
5. "Mission." *International Baccalaureate®*. International Baccalaureate Organization, n.d. Web. 02 June 2016.
6. "IDEA - Building the Legacy of IDEA 2004." *IDEA - Building the Legacy of IDEA 2004*. N.p., n.d. Web. 06 June 2016
7. Louisiana. Department of Education. Pupil Appraisal Handbook. By Cecil J. Picard. Baton Rouge: Louisiana Dept. of Education, 2004. Print.
8. "Hot Topics." *Students with Disabilities*. Louisiana Department of Education, n.d. Web. 06 June 2016.