

Mission Statement: All students will graduate with the skills necessary to excel in their post secondary aspirations.

Vision Statement: Through innovation and personal empowerment, the Edison community will partner with our students, igniting a passion for lifelong learning, instilling the ideals of international mindedness, leading our students to succeed at Edison and beyond.



Thomas Edison High School Inclusion/Special Needs Policy

Special Education Philosophy

Thomas Edison High School is committed to ensuring that all students have the knowledge, skills and confidence they need to succeed, and that they are provided with the learning opportunities and supports required. As part of this philosophy, all students are given the opportunity to participate in the International Baccalaureate (IB) Programme to the best of their ability.

Tailoring our curriculum and teaching to meet the individual needs of our students is essential. An Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is developed for each student who qualifies for special education services.

- We believe all students can learn and have a right to a holistic and inclusive education in a caring and stimulating environment.
- We place great emphasis on the responsibilities of our entire school community to be aware of and provide for students with special educational needs.
- We believe all students will participate in their learning to the best of their ability.
- We view a student's education as a partnership between the student, the parent(s)/guardian(s), and the school.
- We are committed to fostering community partnerships so that students develop a commitment to service and the skills to become an active member of the community.

Common Practices

- **Teachers**

Special Education teachers adapt their instruction to suit individual educational needs. Federal and state laws dictate that goals and objectives of an individual's IEP supersede the requirements of IB.

All teachers are committed to including all students in general education classrooms as determined by annual meetings. This includes students with identified and exceptional learning needs. Teachers are aware of and sensitive to the learning needs

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and styles of all students in their classroom, differentiating the delivery of the programme as required by law. Special education teachers collaborate with general education teachers to address individual students' needs for success in the classroom.

General education teachers work with their Special Education students' case managers/support staff to structure supports and accommodations as identified in students' IEPs. For example:

- o Provide a student with extra time to complete a test or to use technology to assist them in a task.
- o Allow students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding in a way that is appropriate for their abilities.
- o Differentiate instruction to meet the needs of all students in the classroom.

In the Diploma Programme (DP), teachers may modify instruction to meet students' learning needs, but may not modify the DP standards. The Middle Years Programme (MYP), being inclusive of all ninth and tenth grade students, allows teachers more flexibility to make modifications and accommodations based on students' IEPs. Due to the wide range of abilities for students in Federal Setting III at Thomas Edison High School, the IEP team ultimately determines which elements of the MYP will best serve their students' needs.

Special Education programs may include, but are not limited to, the following elements of MYP:

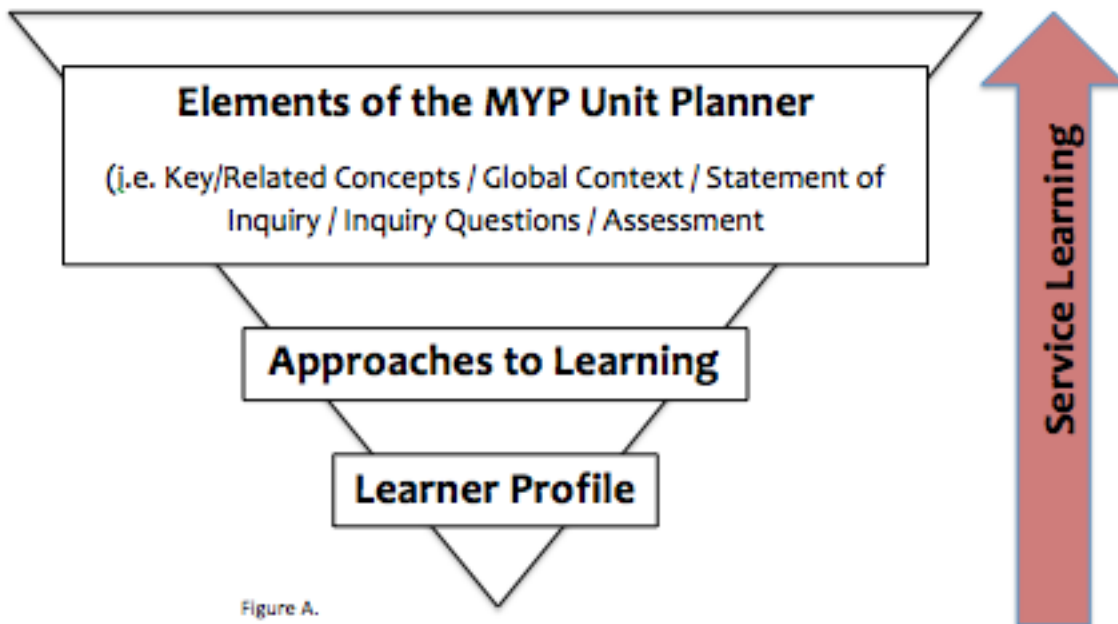


Figure A.

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The diagram above (figure A.) describes the range of implementation levels that will likely be found at Edison High School. Due to the wide range of unique needs of individuals within special education programs, teachers might determine that to best meet their students needs, they would incorporate the Approaches to Learning and develop modified unit plans for their settings.

Teachers will strive to implement the Inquiry/Action/Reflection cycle inherent to the IB philosophy while ensuring that students have opportunities to participate in service learning projects as part of their school experience.

- **Students**

Students work in conjunction with teachers to meet the goals of their IEP. They strive to participate in MYP units to the best of their ability with help from general and special education teachers. Students with IEPs are encouraged to consider IB Diploma Programme coursework whenever appropriate, with the guidance of their case manager and program coordinator. Students will use the Learner Profile attributes and Approaches to Learning to achieve success in school.

- **Parents/Guardians**

Parents are integral partners in the collaboration process. We seek to include parents' views, knowledge, and experience as we collaborate together to meet the needs of learners receiving special services. Parents will work with mainstream and special education teachers to reinforce and support learning at home, attend parent/teacher conferences, and attend IEP meetings.

Professional Development

Special education teachers will be included in school, District-wide, and IB professional development. Teachers will continue to develop their skills with strategies for supporting the needs of all students.

Differentiation

Inclusion is an ongoing process that aims to increase access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers. This can only be successfully achieved in a culture of collaboration, mutual respect, support and problem solving (IBO, 2010). Differentiation is inclusion in practice.

To ensure all students meet their potential, staff at Edison are committed to:

- being open-minded and flexible in their thinking and teaching practices
- identifying the most effective strategies for each learner to achieve curriculum standards

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- scaffolding curriculum and learning experiences to ensure that all students understand the concepts and essential understandings
- using technology and best practices to remove barriers and increase independence
- using classroom modifications and accommodations

Section 504 Accommodation (General Education program)

A student may be eligible for a Section 504 Accommodation Plan if a multidisciplinary team has determined the student has a “substantial limitation in a major life activity.” The plan will describe accommodations which the team, inclusive of parents, has determined to be necessary to allow the student to access instruction. The 504 accommodations may include, but are not limited to, adapted assignments, untimed tests, adaptive equipment, assigned seating, or an adjusted schedule.

Categories of Special Education Disabilities

The following disabilities are recognized and defined by the State of Minnesota and serviced by Edison High School:

- DD - Developmentally Delayed (formerly ECSE)
- ASD - Autism Spectrum Disorder
- DB - Deaf/Blind
- EBD - Emotional/Behavioral Disorders
- DHH - Deaf/Hard of Hearing
- DCD - Developmental Cognitive Disability
 - DCD-MM (Mild to Moderate)
 - DCD-SP (Severe to Profound)
- OHD - Other Health Disabilities
- PI - Physically Impaired
- BI - Traumatic Brain Injury
- SLD - Specific Learning Disability
- SL - Speech/Language Impairment
- SNAP – Student in Need of Alternative Programming
- VI - Visually Impaired
- SMI - Severely Multiple Impaired

Referral Process

Students are typically referred for a special education evaluation by their parent or by staff working with the child. Parents and staff can initiate an evaluation for special

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education services by contacting the student support person (School Psychologist, School Social Worker, School Counselor) assigned to their child. A referral for evaluation includes documentation from the parents and/or staff regarding the area(s) of concern and what interventions have been previously attempted. If the team determines that more information is needed or if interventions have not yet been attempted in the area(s) of concern, the team (including parents) might choose to delay the start of an evaluation. If the team determines that there is sufficient data to support moving forward with an evaluation, then a referral is made to the child study team and a special education team member helps to generate an appropriate evaluation plan. Evaluation procedures may include standardized intellectual and/or academic tests, record reviews, classroom observations, interviews, health screenings, etc. Once an evaluation has been completed (within 30 school days after parent consent is obtained), an IEP (Individual Education Plan) team meets to review the information gathered and determine if the student qualifies for and is in need of specially designed instruction.

Annual Review

The special needs policy will be reviewed to ensure that the policy remains a live document that reflects the needs and desires of our school and district.

Communicating the Policy

The policy will be placed on Edison's website and made available to families at parent/teacher conferences. It will be available in multiple languages. As a whole we serve many students who are learning in a language other than their mother tongue. We view this as an asset and will continue to support these students in the future as a means of maintaining access for all students.

Bibliography

"Inclusive Practices." Minneapolis Public Schools, n.d. Web. 16 Mar. 2016.
<http://profdev.mpls.k12.mn.us/articulate/spec_ed/inclusive_practices_message/story.html>.

MYP: From Principles into Practice. Cardiff: International Baccalaureate Organization, 2014. Print.