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## **Marietta City Schools**

### **International Baccalaureate Program**

### **District Inclusive Education Policy**

#### **Rationale**

The vision of Marietta City Schools is for all students to learn to their fullest potential. The district mission states, “In partnership with families and the community our mission is to prepare each student to maximize career, college, and life opportunities”. Both the vision and the mission of the district embrace the belief that all students should have the opportunity to participate as fully as possible in all aspects of the educational program. This includes the International Baccalaureate programs available in our schools. The purpose of this policy is to describe how students with different learning needs will be supported and provided access to challenging and rigorous learning opportunities.

#### **Philosophy**

We believe that all learners have unique needs to consider when helping them to meet/exceed their academic and non-academic potential. To provide access to the IB program, the district utilizes approaches and support systems that address the individual needs and varied learning styles of students, including those identified with special needs (Special Education, Gifted, English Learners, students with 504 plans). By recognizing the diversity of our collective learning community, we support the development of internationally minded people.

#### **Inclusion**

The school district follows all federal and state guidelines in teaching students with special needs. Marietta City Schools provides comprehensive services and supports to meet the varied needs of students. Professionals are on staff to provide psychological services, health services, social services, education for the homeless, ESOL instruction, gifted instruction, student support, and services for students with special needs. Counselors are employed at all schools to provide a comprehensive school counseling program to develop mindsets and behaviors around learning strategies, self-management skills, and social skills that lead to success.

In Marietta City Schools, students receive instruction in the least restrictive environments. Students with disabilities, English Learners, and students identified as gifted are primarily educated in general education environments with appropriate support and services. Teachers are trained to accommodate learners by differentiating instruction and assessment. Teachers also imbed inquiry and problem-solving activities in units to encourage high levels of engagement for all learners. Technology and collaboration are used to better reach all students’ learning needs. Teachers

engage in the gradual release model of teaching to encourage students to develop independence. Identified students receive support from teachers with specialized degrees and/or certifications in these areas through small group, team taught, collaborative, or consultative services to address educational goals. When appropriate, regular education and support teachers co-teach to keep learning on target for special needs students and others. This approach allows students to thrive in an inclusive environment. Where self-contained classes are designated to be best for student outcomes, highly qualified teachers and specially designed classrooms are provided.

Appropriate curriculum, instruction, and assessment strategies are reviewed annually for students with special needs (Special Education, English Learners, and students with 504 plans). In our IB schools, all teachers have access to the IB special needs materials.

### **Differentiation**

All students receive instruction that enables them to succeed within the range of their approaches to learning, abilities, and interests. Differentiation is the process of identifying, for each learner, the most effective strategies for achieving goals. Teachers use data from pre-assessments and formative assessments to identify student strengths and areas for support when planning and delivering instruction. Dynamic groupings, tiered lessons, inquiry, and open-ended learning activities are strategically designed to address student learning needs and promote student growth.

The Marietta City Schools' Inclusion policy encourages classrooms where all students are challenged to become lifelong learners who display the IB attributes and all students have opportunities to learn to their fullest potential to maximize life opportunities.

### **IB Diploma Examinations & Inclusion**

Marietta City Schools joins the IB in believing that all candidates should be allowed to demonstrate their ability under assessment conditions that are as fair as possible. Standard assessment conditions may put candidates with learning support requirements at a disadvantage by preventing them from demonstrating their level of attainment. The IB may authorize inclusive assessment arrangements in these circumstances. This allowance applies to candidates with long-term or permanent challenges.

Procedures for requesting inclusive assessment arrangements are explained in the *Handbook of procedures for the Diploma Programme* and the Diploma Programme publication *Candidates with assessment access requirements*. IB coordinators are responsible for submitting requests for inclusive assessment arrangements using the online application in the IB Information System (IBIS). Requests for inclusive assessment arrangements should be submitted after the candidate is first registered for IB exams but no later than November 1 prior to the May examinations.



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The IB is committed to an educational philosophy based on international-mindedness. Therefore, the inclusive assessment arrangements policy of the IB may not reflect the standard practice of any one country. To achieve equity among candidates with assessment access requirements, the policy represents the result of a consideration of accepted practice in different countries. While the IB aims to authorize inclusive assessment arrangements normally available to the candidate concerned, authorization will only be given for arrangements that are consistent with the policy and practice of the IB. It should not be assumed that the IB will necessarily agree to the arrangements requested by the school. Coordinators are required to provide information on the candidate's usual method of working in the classroom, as well as medical or other professional documentation.

**This district policy should be reviewed annually and revised as necessary following the review.**