

Special Needs Policy

Grimsley High School International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme

Revised May 2019

Introduction and School Context

Grimsley High School offers an inclusive school environment, including in our International Baccalaureate Programme. Students are accepted to Grimsley High School's IB Diploma Programme upon the successful completion of the application that is provided by Guilford County Schools during the Magnet Application time period. Once accepted into Grimsley's Pre-IB and IB Programmes, we will work together as a team of educators and parents to successfully address the challenges that special needs students face in learning and assessment. As part of that commitment, this policy lays out the overarching principles which we use to support these students and help them build a foundation for their own learning.

Legal Context

As North Carolina public school in the Guilford County Schools school district, Grimsley High School (including its IB Diploma Programme) must meet a number of requirements for special education under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) passed by the United States Congress and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 to protect the rights of individuals with special needs. Typically, Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) are completed for students who qualify for special education services (the students have 1 of more of the 13 disabilities listed in IDEA) and 504s are for students who have medical, psychological, and other needs that require modification to the academic learning environment.

Process for Referrals for Accommodations and Individualized Education Plans/504 Plans

At Grimsley High School, we have specific programs in place to help all children succeed. For students who require accommodations due to their status as an English as a Second Language student, they will receive support as outlined in our Grimsley High School IB Language Policy. If a student does not currently receive special needs services when they come to high school, the following steps are in place to set up an accommodation plan:

Grimsley High School Intervention Support Teams: IST (Individualized Education Plans) and 504 Team

By working with the referring teacher and the parents, the Intervention Support Team addresses academic and/or behavioral concerns by following a process designed to identify essential information, to develop an appropriate intervention plan, and to collect critical data when necessary. Specifically, the Intervention Support Team helps the classroom teacher choose the appropriate academic skill or behavior to work on; define the identified skill as specifically as possible; find research-based interventions that may work for the identified skill or behavior, and use curriculum-based measurement (CBM) to monitor how much progress is being made. Research supports the strong positive impact of the regular classroom environment upon student achievement.

The 504 team, while a smaller team, will also collaborate with the parents, student, and teacher to create a plan that modifies the classroom environment and assessments in a way that will help best

facilitate learning and provide an equitable environment for education success based on the student's needs.

From Policy to Practice

Within this context, North Carolina schools are responsible for providing special needs students with an appropriate education. Due to IEPs, LEPs (Limited English Proficient Forms), and 504, when special needs students enter the IB Diploma Programme at Grimsley High School, in most cases they will have already gone through an individualized evaluation and planning process that takes their needs into account.

Therefore, when a special needs student enters the Programme, it is critical to ensure that their transition is smooth and draws on the existing knowledge of the student's needs as well as adhering to the principles laid out in special educational needs within the International Baccalaureate Programme.

Effective collaboration will be maintained between the student, the parent(s), special education employees, the IB Coordinator, the IB Counselor and IB teachers to maintain the most beneficial accommodations. The 504s, LEPs, and IEPs will be reviewed and modified as needed for students.

Teaching

When a student with special needs enters the Grimsley High School IB Diploma Programme, the student's assigned Teacher of Record (TOR) will be contacted. The TOR will work closely with the special education employees, parents, and students to determine the level of modification and intervention that is required for the student to successfully pursue the IB Diploma or Certificates. The student's needs will then be communicated to his/her IB teachers, and appropriate changes made in teaching methods and curriculum throughout the two-year Diploma Programme. These changes will be made while carefully collaborating with the student, involving the parent(s) in key decisions, and drawing on the expertise of special education employees.

Assessment

IB students with special needs will be considered for appropriate special assessment arrangements that are in line with the principles set out in General regulations: Diploma Programme and Candidates with special assessment needs. The student's ESL Case Manager, Special Education Case Manager and/or 504 Case Manager will communicate the Individual Education Plan/504/LEP, which includes required assessment modifications, to the IB Coordinator, at the start of the school year. This way the IB Coordinator can make necessary assessment accommodations requests to IB during the registration period. The IB Coordinator will notify the examinations proctor and all IB teachers working with the student of these accommodations. Assessment accommodations must be given to the student all year during teacher-made assessments as well as on any relevant IB assessments.

Evaluating and Revising This Policy

This policy will be revised periodically in order to include new ideas and adapt to the IB Diploma Programme's changing international, national, and local context. A collaborative revision process will be initiated by the IB Coordinator at least once every four years. Any changes to this policy will be circulated to the larger Grimsley High School IB community.